

EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE
ENERGY SITUATION

PREPARED FOR THE
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet presents a sample of comments on the energy situation as found in various newspaper and periodical editorials and individual commentary by columnists.

There has been considerable interest expressed in providing a collection of editorial comment relating to the Administration's proposed National Energy Plan, including requests from members of the Committee on Ways and Means.

This material was collected with the assistance of the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. It covers newspapers from all of the States and the District of Columbia, and several national news periodicals.

I. NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

(ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY BY STATE)

Alabama

The Birmingham News (April 22, 1977)

"Carter's Energy Plan"

President Carter's energy message to Congress was the most important act of his presidency so far, and almost anyone would have to admit that he acted with political courage in outlining early in his administration measures which will require great sacrifices from the people.

The energy proposals reflect straight-line thinking rather than second-guessing the many interests which make up our country. Mr. Carter obviously had in mind attacking problems rather than worrying about how the powerful members of Congress, say, from the oil states would think about specific measures.

Yet, for all the verve with which the plan was formulated and presented to Congress, it is not without its flaws and not free of formulations reflecting questionable premises.

The thrust of the Carter energy policy is conservation. The conservation measures he proposes represent a massive intervention of government into the economy—and seem to overlook the potential of the private sector to solve massive problems such as that of energy shortage.

Unless we nationalize energy—perish the thought!—government will not solve the energy problem. The ingenuity of the American people can, if the government allows the enterprising enough incentive to risk capital and effort to do the job.

Yet, Mr. Carter made it clear that a central part of his energy program would be to deny anything other than a minimal profit to companies in business to supply the American public with energy.

He proposes a five-cents per gallon tax on gasoline per year for every year that we fail to meet conservation targets, and he proposes a well-head tax on domestic oil plus more stringent regulation of natural gas prices. Thus, he sees the need for higher prices, boosted by taxes, to discourage consumption. But he fails to recognize the need that the private sector will have for additional capital if new sources of energy are to be developed.

Who would buy stock in an oil or natural gas company as a result of Mr. Carter's speech? Who would want to undergo the risks of searching out possible new oil fields under the economics which prevail under Mr. Carter's plan?

Much of Mr. Carter's plan is good, but someone aptly said that it is like half a pair of scissors. It would make Americans conserve energy, but it is essentially negative in regard to producing more energy.

We heard Mr. Carter come on television Monday night and tell the American people that the energy crisis is real and that we must deal with it. Wednesday night, he told the American people how we could adopt measures to stretch out the energy we have. What would be great is if Mr. Carter would come on television tonight and tell the American people that the government has faith that the private sector can solve this great problem, that it will provide the incentives for it to do so and that we must face the future with confidence that the light of our civilization will not dim and go out within a relatively few years.

Great leaders have always provided their people with hope and encouragement, and that element of uplift was missing from Mr. Carter's energy message.

Alaska

Anchorage Daily News (April 23, 1977)

"Message No. 2"

With his energy conservation message out of the way, President Carter is concentrating on another pertinent chapter on the subject: energy and the environment. A message on that subject is expected within the next few weeks.

A draft of the proposed document discusses a number of priority areas: nuclear wastes, a moratorium on strip mining of prime farmland and—importantly for Alaska—a government office to regulate development in the nation's outer continental shelf (OCS) waters.

The Nixon and Ford administrations set the nation on a rapid energy development course in OCS areas. For our state, it meant a series of federal offshore oil and gas lease sales, one of which—the Gulf of Alaska sale—already has taken place.

The Carter administration is slowing the process. The Interior Department already has expressed intentions of accomplishing "orderly development" in waters off Alaska, and Mr. Carter's draft of his environment message underscores that objective.

The proposed message says that in order to properly protect the environment, Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus will be directed to study the creation of a new "administrative entity" in his department to manage offshore resources.

The draft also singles out Alaska's coastal areas as being particularly sensitive environmental zones. They should be given special treatment, according to the draft, and if necessary, marine sanctuaries should be established.

The administration is wise to provide additional consideration of the environmental consequences of an energy development policy in Alaska's offshore area. Without question, conservation here is the most important step in protecting the environment while energy goals are being met.

Early on, the administration policy was aptly described by Secretary Andrus: "Our President . . . is cancelling the blank check that once went to those who would exploit resources and pollute the environment in the name of progress. Business as usual has been put out of business."

Mr. Carter apparently will address the practical application of those words in his coming environmental message, the cornerstone of which states, "Wiser and more efficient use of energy is essential to a better environment." We welcome it.

Arizona

The Arizona Daily Star, Phoenix (April 24, 1977)

"Carter's Energy Plan Workable"

For the first time since the problem cropped up during the Arab boycott, the president has presented a sensible energy plan to the nation.

The Carter administration has logically decided to emphasize conservation, providing tax credits for home insulation, mandatory performance standards for home appliances and a tax on cars that use too much gasoline.

The program for higher gasoline prices, allowing up to 50-cent increase, thinly disguises at least one more reason the Carter administration decided to abandon its \$50 tax rebate. The higher fuel costs guarantee another round of cost-push inflation, which would have been worse with the rebate.

Add to this that the administration has no effective program for coping with inflation. It has only a committee that is supposed to persuade labor and industry not to seek higher prices or bigger wage settlements.

The administration, however, has little room to maneuver when it comes to inflation. If the pressure of higher gasoline prices were not part of the president's energy package, neither industry nor the public would have the stimulus to conserve.

Conservation does not necessarily mean a drop in productivity. Business Week points out that from 1947 to 1954 there was a dip in energy use but the gross national product still showed gains. This seems to have been caused by the sharp increase in fuel prices after the war.

By and large the Carter administration has chosen the better of two evils in trying to achieve conservation: price or tax increases. The only other choice is to legislatively mandate conservation. The latter tends to occur outside the market and therefore tends to cause chaos rather than promote conservation.

Arkansas

Arkansas Democrat, Little Rock (April 24, 1977)

"Arkansas and Energy"

No energy plan devisable could please all the interests touched by President Carter's giant energy plan, but Arkansas' congressmen responded predictably in the main and generally favorably. We join them in relief that the Congress, after five years vacillation, will at least attempt to produce an energy policy before the snow flies.

It was foreordained which parts of the plan Arkansas would criticize. We have an energy-intensive, agriculturally-based economy, and we are also a growing industrial state with rapidly rising energy demands. We are also the country's leading consumer of propane fuel and the leading per-capita user of gasoline.

These facts of life account for Sen. John L. McClellan's lack of "enthusiasm" for Mr. Carter's iffy proposal to raise gasoline taxes. Sen. Dale Bumpers also opposes any rise on the ground that the state

lacks mass transit. Rep. Bill Alexander says the tax would burden those least able to pay it. Rep. Jim Guy Tucker is concerned about the tax's effect on jobs and purchasing power. Congressman Ray Thornton would like a more positive overall energy plan—fewer restrictions and penalties.

As for Mr. Carter's plan for taxing gas-eating family cars, Bumpers would prefer a simple manufacturing ban to take effect on a given date. That, we think, is a little too tyrannical; the penalty tax should suffice, as both Alexander and Tucker agree.

Tucker notes a glaring omission in the plan—its failure to deal with propane, diesel fuel and fertilizer, mainstays of our agri-based economy.

There seems to be general agreement on Mr. Carter's common sense plan to extend tax-credits for home insulation and his proposal to finance the insulation through loans extended by utilities, which would get their money back by stretching repayment out through regular utility billings. Few will quarrel with that.

There is less agreement about Mr. Carter's proposal to apply something like the "lifeline" concept to utility rates—requiring that bigger users, industries and business, pay the same rates as residences. Such users are charged less because they cost less to serve—not because they use extra energy. Making them pay more would not conserve energy, but would feed inflation by raising the cost of their goods and services to consumers.

Little comment has been made so far about Mr. Carter's plan for conversion from petroleum to coal, which accounts for 70 per cent of our total national energy reserves. But Arkansas' lignite, now being tested in West Germany for commerciability, has a place in both the national and state energy picture. As Governor Pryor says, Mr. Carter should have mentioned it.

It is far too early to make any predictions about the prospects of Mr. Carter's overall energy plan in a Congress reacting to home pressures and buffeted by interest groups. A dozen committees will shape or reshape whatever of the many-sided plan makes it through Congress this year. But it is already plain that Arkansas lawmakers, like those of most other states, think the least of proposals to run the price of gasoline high and the most of the proposals to make homes energy-efficient.

Dirty energy

President Carter wants to make nuclear energy safer for America and the world, but, because of the energy crisis and national rivalries, he isn't getting much of a hearing. He should be heard out.

The President, a former nuclear engineer, isn't keen on nuclear energy. He knows its dangers and wants its peaceful use kept and limited and its proliferation into deadly weapons policed as much as possible. Characteristically, he put his call for new "safer" nuclear plants at the bottom of his energy address to Congress Wednesday.

But the qualifying word "safer" is only a footnote to what Mr. Carter has said and done in recent days. He has banned plutonium technology in this country and asked the rest of the nuclear world to do the same. He is as concerned about safe, peaceful use of nuclear energy as about wartime or terrorist use of its bomb form.

Plutonium technology is a technical topic, but one that we all can and should understand as involving life and death, quite apart from missiles. Plutonium is a product of uranium-based spent nuclear fuel. It can be and is produced by reactors the world over and is the basis of most nuclear energy. Reprocessed from spent uranium fuel, it can be used to produce either new energy or bombs, both dirty and dangerous, and deadly poison. But plutonium is plentiful and uranium is scarce.

Mr. Carter says that the U.S. is through with plutonium and will henceforth export only slightly-enriched uranium for peaceful nuclear purposes—a mix that can't be made into bombs. It is a historic decision, but the rest of the nuclear world is cold to his call that they do the same. Germany and France are well along on plutonium as the basis of their own energy needs and those of other countries willing to buy plutonium technology. Japan and Britain (like the rest of the world) have little uranium. We ourselves have little enough.

It is not a pretty picture—energy needs versus the desire to keep a dirty, deadly material out of the hands of nations eager to have their own bombs (India already has one by the plutonium route) and away from terrorists eager to build their own crude versions.

The main hope for Mr. Carter's plan is that nuclear nations, Russia included, are supposed to be near an agreement not to export the re-processing equipment that alone can produce plutonium. Mr. Carter hopes at least for that agreement, and Americans should back him.

California

The Fresno Bee (April 23, 1977)

"The Energy Program and You"

Taken as a whole, President Jimmy Carter's energy message to Congress notably accomplished two things. For the first time, it presented a cohesive, total energy program for the United States. And it gave strong direction and leadership to a massive effort to meet the nation's greatest domestic challenge.

The positive steps recommended by Carter may not be the ultimate answer to a vastly complex problem. But the President showed courage in coming forth this early in his administration with an undoubtedly politically risky policy that would mean sacrifices by virtually everyone in the land. The alternative, of course, is the prospect of greater hardship in the future.

If the program goes through, consumers will pay more for gasoline and major appliances. Excise taxes will boost the prices of big gas-guzzling cars. Americans generally will be expected to help develop a new ethic of conservation by the most wasteful of modern societies.

Yet if Carter's proposal has any hope of success, it will depend substantially on the willingness of the American public to conserve in every conceivable way, suffer certain changes in the present style of living and pay whatever extra costs are required.

The key element in the President's plan is conservation; it's cheaper than producing new fuel supplies and can lead to quick results. But there would be rewarding tax incentives for such energy-saving measures as better insulation for homes, use of solar power and heating

and cooling, and holding down gasoline consumption. Carter also advocates returning much of the stiff increases in taxes on domestically produced crude oil in the form of a tax credit or outright payment to those who pay no income taxes.

Carter's program faces an uncertain future in Congress. The proposed increase in the gasoline tax has drawn negative reaction. Bitter disputes are expected on the excise tax on heavier cars, lifting natural gas prices without deregulating them and other facets of the far-reaching legislative package.

There is a feeling that only the American people can save the program from defeat or dismemberment. A Congress convinced the citizens of this country understand the fuel supply will not last forever and are prepared to face reality is a Congress that will be persuaded to act favorably on the President's program.

Los Angeles Times (April 26, 1977)

"The Realities of Energy"

Our colleagues at the Wall Street Journal are unhappy with President Carter's energy plan, mainly because of what they see as its "total emphasis" on conservation instead of production, and its neglect of market forces as a means of meeting energy needs. The Journal's views may reflect a possibly not insignificant body of opinion, and so we think they deserve to be considered seriously.

A summary of the Journal's ideas on energy would go something like this:

Enough energy is potentially available to meet mankind's needs for as far as the eye can see. There is a lot of undiscovered oil and natural gas, there is coal, there is nuclear fission and eventually nuclear fusion, and there is solar power. What is required to develop these resources is an end to price controls on existing conventional fuel sources, so that energy companies can accumulate capital for future development. What is also needed are compromises on "environmental zealotry" so that energy exploitation is given precedence over strict pollution controls, protection of endangered species, and the like.

Much in these views may make a certain abstract sense. The trouble is that dealing with the nation's energy problem is not something that can be done in the abstract. It is something that has to be done in the here and now, with full regard for the realities of price, supply and the time required to develop fuel sources. In that context the Journal, we think, manages to miss entirely the point of Carter's plan.

Begin with the question of future supplies. Large-scale generation of electricity from solar power and nuclear fusion are almost certainly technologically achievable, though not until sometime in the next century at best. More nuclear fission generating plants can be built, but there are economic and safety limits on how many can be expected. The United States does have a lot of coal but, again, it is going to take quite a bit of time to put it to much-increased use. As for oil and natural gas, a lot may indeed remain to be found, but even under the best of circumstances the technological limits of dis-

covery, recovery and processing put the stuff beyond reach for many years to come.

In making one such kind of economic argument about energy—lift all price constraints and let the free market do what it is supposed to do—the Journal ignores another important question: How much in the way of higher costs can the economy stand?

What would be the inflationary impact of uncontrolled domestic prices, particularly since those prices surely would go to the levels artificially set by the OPEC cartel and would keep pace with future increases? The world oil price now is nearly \$14 a barrel. The shah of Iran thinks \$20 would be a fairer price, and before long that may be what we get. What, then, about business expansion and jobs, about the effect on other energy prices, about the flow of capital overseas to buy the oil and gas needed to keep things going until a supposed domestic free market in energy paid its supposed dividends?

The Carter energy plan, it seems to us, has taken into careful account such basic considerations as the lead time needed for new energy development, the probable and not just possible likelihood of expanding new domestically controlled petroleum supplies, and what cost burdens would be acceptable. It has also given proper regard to safeguarding the environment, not out of any impulse toward absolutist “zealotry” but with an appreciation of what can be done feasibly, and what must be done to protect health and to preserve the nation’s natural heritage. Giving due weight to all these considerations, it has concluded that conservation—which primarily means ending waste—is the most effective and practical near-term answer to the energy supply and cost problem. That is the plan’s central point, and we agree with it completely.

We simply can’t think of anything good to say in behalf of continuing to waste energy. We leave it to the theologians to determine if avoidable waste is sinful. On our part, we know it is just dumb, and indefensible. Not to husband irreplaceable resources; not to act out of thrift and foresight in preparing for an unpredictable future; not to put prudence ahead of profligacy; not to give primacy to self-restraint instead of self-indulgence—what kind of life would we be preparing for ourselves and posterity if this were our doctrine?

Edmund Burke, 200 years ago, said it well: “Society cannot exist unless a controlling power of will and appetite be placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without.” Carter’s energy conservation approach, with its systems of incentives and penalties, offers such a controlling power on our fuel appetite. And we need it.

Oakland Tribune (April 25, 1977)

“The Stark Facts”

Why is it we wait until a crisis situation hits us before we do something constructive—such as conserving our natural resources?

And why is it when we discover that we should be conserving those resources that it is usually too little if not too late?

These questions came to mind following President Carter’s proposals for his national energy plan presented Wednesday to Congress. So severe is the crisis, the President said, it has become “the greatest challenge our country will face during our lifetimes.”

President Carter's proposals call for tough mandatory measures to meet the nation's energy needs but they fall short of what is needed.

According to the Central Intelligence Agency, without energy conservation, the world demand for oil will exceed supply by 1985, a mere eight years away.

Yet President Carter has proposed a moderate plan for a standby gas tax starting at a nickel a gallon and rising to 50 cents after 10 years if automobile gasoline consumption fails to decline. That is not enough.

A large tax should be slapped on gas to discourage unnecessary use of gasoline. Gas taxes should be raised so high as to force people out of their cars and into mass transit. Taxes raised should go to subsidize mass transit.

That way those wasting gas would be, in effect, subsidizing those who are conserving gasoline.

President Carter wants to impose the tax gradually, but when that is done, people accept it easier. By slapping a big tax on now, it would have a dramatic impact necessary to immediately force gas conservation.

We must start saving energy. President Carter noted that Americans use twice as much energy per person as does West Germany, Japan and Sweden, which have about the same standard of living.

We had better start conserving energy or we can watch this country begin to slow down as our natural resources dwindle. And that is not hyperbole, that is a stark fact.

San Francisco Chronicle (April 22, 1977)

"The Plan Now On the Table"

President Carter's energy program, given in his address to the Congress on Wednesday, outlined a future for Americans which, if not bleak, will certainly be less comfortable than this country has been accustomed to. Either we conserve our energy, or we pay more for it.

The only alternative to forced conservation—by higher taxes, combined with tax incentives—is rationing, and even though Mr. Carter likened the energy crisis to a wartime situation, our feeling is that rationing would not be palatable to the public. Thus the program the President has outlined is by far the more acceptable, difficult as it may be.

The American's love affair with his automobile is a cliché, made one by the fact it is so true. And because that is so, Mr. Carter's proposal of a "standby tax" on gasoline to rise year after year by five cents a gallon is not at all likely to prove a sufficient discouragement of wasteful consumption or a sufficient encouragement of leaving one's car in the garage to accomplish the measure of conservation he has in mind.

Even this tax of five cents would not go into effect until 1979, 19 months from now, and as Senator Jackson says, it "won't make a ripple." What is needed to get results is not an easy increase but a whopping increase, right now, to bring about less wasteful gasoline use.

However the President is doubtless aware that asking for such a tax to be levied at once would not meet with favor in Congress as it adjusts to the new realities of the energy crisis. Congressmen who have been heard in comment on the President's speech show their reluctance to bite the bullet.

We are not without hope that much of the energy policy will find its way to enactment, but it looks like a struggle ahead to get Congress to go along with the essential part of the program, taxing gasoline to discourage its consumption.

President Carter has, taking it altogether, boldly faced and dealt with the energy shortage that faces this nation and its economy. He has made the right proposals for moving toward greater reliance on coal and nuclear fuels while we reduce our dependence on imported oil. He has asked for a commitment by the public to conserve energy in every way possible, and we will soon see, no doubt, what the public response is to be. But in the meantime we are certainly entitled to ask and expect of Congress stronger signs of support for, and greater willingness to comply with, the President's program than came from the unresponsive floor of the House of Representatives during Wednesday evening's historic session.

Colorado

The Denver Post (April 20, 1977)

"President's Goals Sound; It's Up to Congress to Act"

President Carter has warned that this country faces an energy disaster unless we take immediate steps to avert what "may be a national catastrophe." It may mean hardship to most Americans, he warned, but is a task that can no longer be delayed.

Mr. Carter's judgment is correct and he deserves public support. Detailed implementation will be in the hands of the Congress. And it is up to Congress to heed the energy warning and act quickly and decisively.

Fortunately, Colorado's seven-member congressional delegation generally agrees with the President's assessment that serious times are upon us. Colorado's delegation must take the lead in setting up barriers to energy calamity once and for all. Should they fail or waiver, they'll be held responsible.

Until Mr. Carter makes his specific recommendations to the Congress Wednesday night, we assume he has devised the first fully thought-out prescription for one of the nation's crucial difficulties. Since the OPEC nations quadrupled the price of oil in 1973, we've been dilly-dallying around.

Mr. Carter pulled no punches in describing the crisis facing this nation. And the rest of the world, too, for that matter. He predicted that unless profound changes are made to lower oil consumption, the world by the early 1980s will be demanding more oil than it can produce. "If we continue increasing consumption, we could use up all the proved reserves in the entire world by the end of the next decade," he said.

The President termed the battle to conserve energy supplies the "moral equivalent of war—except that we will be uniting our efforts to build and not destroy."

Mr. Carter's decision to make energy conservation his first major battle was no spur-of-the-moment thought. Ever since his candidacy became serious, it was a theme to which he returned time and again.

Early indications have been that the country reacted favorably to the President's "the sky is falling" message. The American people, one

senses, will be with Mr. Carter provided they get assurance that conservation measures will be administered equitably, falling equally on everybody—individually and regionally.

After Wednesday night, when the specifics are spelled out, it will be up to Congress to act. Pessimists doubt that the President can win congressional approval of stringent conservation measures. Already, individual solons have gone on record as being against a hefty boost in the gasoline tax (a Carter option that would bring about quick short-term results and which has been espoused by this newspaper for more than two years). There are also bound to be pet peeves voiced by special interest groups which have a way of influencing legislative initiatives.

Some of the latter have already begun to holler—among them the oil companies, automobile manufacturers, coal producers, consumer pressure groups and the like. It is imperative that if sacrifice is called for, it be shared by the fat cats as well as the private individual.

Collectively, the individual will can be the most vigorous prod to Congress. Mr. Carter has made an effective beginning at mobilizing this potent force.

Connecticut

The Hartford Courant (April 25, 1977)

"Cheap Energy, Cheap Lives?"

The President has come up with a national energy policy because he is concerned about future oil and gas shortages that could have a catastrophic effect on our economy, on our ability to survive as a free nation.

And by most estimates of our oil and gas reserves, the President is right. There will be sacrifices in the year ahead. Those who have enjoyed cheap energy—oil, gasoline and natural gas—will find they will have to adapt to a less enjoyable lifestyle that will mean high-cost fuels, scarcity and rationing.

In many ways, however, the converse of an energy crisis could also have a catastrophic effect on our society. What if, suddenly, a new, abundant and very inexpensive fuel were discovered? What would happen then?

Well, on the positive side, it would have a beneficial effect on the economy, because costs of production of many items would be drastically reduced. And consumer purchases of many machines, including vehicles, would greatly increase if the fuel costs were very low.

And certainly the lower costs of production would mean that the volume of unnecessary trinkets, gee-gaws, and disposable plastic, glass, and metal items would vastly increase—items that would end up as a blot on the landscape, and that would pollute the waters.

The national speed law of 55 miles per hour on the highway—a law written to save energy but which has saved tens of thousands of human lives—would either be repealed or ignored, as the number and variety of vehicles increased. Highways would have to be expanded, and at great cost to the environment and the principles of good land-use planning.

And the increased production, which would undoubtedly be considerable, would take us rapidly into a crisis that is already a problem in

some areas. That is the worldwide increasing shortages of many essential metals used as alloys to produce special steels, electronic tubes and other high-technology items.

Sociologists and other social scientists have been concerned for years that Americans are too preoccupied with machines, and to the neglect of humanity and human values.

If a cheap, abundant new fuel were discovered, it would certainly solve many of the problems of poverty throughout the world—poverty that often means life is little more than a struggle for survival.

But then, after the problems of poverty are solved, and there is time for living, will there be more time for improving human relations—or will we become more and more preoccupied with our machines, with wasteful production of a glut of nonessential junk, and with faster vehicles that lead to more highway congestion, increased speeds, and increasing disregard for the violence of accidents, and death?

Delaware

Evening Journal, Wilmington (April 20, 1977)

"Mr. Carter's Warnings"

President Carter's "The Sky Is Falling" energy speech followed the Gong Show on some TV channels Monday night.

The Gong Show's performers must get off to a quick start or a judge strikes the gong and the act gets the hook.

Fortunately Mr. Carter wasn't operating under those rules because he made a fairly slow start.

He must have devoted all of 200 words to generalities about testing the character of the American people, controlling our future instead of letting the future control us and something about the "moral equivalent of war."

Then he said, "I know that some of you may doubt that we face real energy shortages."

After that, we believe, he should have convinced any sane members of his audience, no matter how inattentive they had been up until then.

The President said nothing that should have been new to anyone.

Nobody should have been startled to hear that "ours is the most wasteful nation on Earth. We waste more energy than we import. With about the same standard of living we use twice as much energy per person as do other countries like Germany, Japan and Sweden."

But coming from a chief executive who says that this very day he will present to the Congress an energy plan that is going to cost him politically, the words had a chilling impact.

Nothing the President could have forecast about his 10-principle proposal could be bet on more safely than this: "...all the special interest groups in the country will attack that part of this plan that affects them directly. They will say that sacrifice is fine, as long as other people do it."

And, of course, we are all in one special interest group or another.

Was the President convincing about the need to do something drastic? Try this:

"During the 1950s, people (worldwide) used twice as much oil as during the 1940s. During the 1960s, we used twice as much as during

the 1950s. And in each of these decades, more oil was consumed than in all of mankind's previous history." The President's manner was almost that of a very patient teacher toward a classroom full of rather stupid children, but it would be difficult to make his message any more graphic.

Maybe we can underline things a bit.

What Mr. Carter said about those rates of consumption was this: If the God of the fundamentalists decided to start over right now with everything but mankind, six days from now the society of Tuesday, April 26, 1977, would have a spanking new world with all of the resources, including petroleum, that it has ever had. How much longer would that give us to continue to use oil the way we have been using it? It might give us 10 years more or 20 years more. Some people might even claim 30, but it is hard to see how anyone could claim more than that.

The President said that at current rates of increasing consumption "we could use up all the proven reserves of oil in the entire world by the end of the next decade."

If we stretch our resources—a big if for people who still had to be told Monday night that we face "real energy shortages"—we might maintain our real standards of living until acceptable versions of coal, solar, wind, tide, water and nuclear power can come on line.

If we don't accept Mr. Carter's proposal, or something else that will be effective, there is going to be a mighty ugly and uncomfortable gap sometime early in the 21st century.

There may still be some people who will insist that that doesn't amount to running out of oil.

To them we commend our bumper sticker slogan, "Drive 60. Freeze your grandchild."

District of Columbia

The Washington Post (April 22, 1977)

"The Moral Equivalent of What?"

Were you frightened by President Carter's talk of energy catastrophes? Are you fearful that we'll all begin living by candlelight when the great cutbacks start? You can relax. In his Monday speech, Mr. Carter invoked the rhetoric of great national urgency. But the detailed program that he recited to Congress on Wednesday night follows the counsel of deep caution and extreme gradualism. Nothing much, it appears, is going to happen for a long, long time.

The method of Mr. Carter's program is the right one. He would depend—mainly, although not exclusively—on higher prices and taxes to induce conservation.

Nobody likes paying more. But that's infinitely preferable to the harassment and inflexibility of comprehensive regulation and rationing. The program's general direction is admirable. But the languor with which it moves, as though this country had all the time in the world, is reason for acute concern.

The only measures effective immediately would be the tax credits for people who insulate their houses and industries that begin to install equipment such as solar heaters to save fuel. The taxes on big cars, and subsidies for little ones, would only reinforce the fuel-efficiency stand-

ards already required by law. The escalation of crude-oil prices would gently begin next year, at a barely perceptible rate of two or three cents a gallon. The federal standards for insulating new buildings would be moved up from 1981 to 1980. And so forth.

By this time next year, you'd need a magnifying glass to measure the impact. By 1980, the repercussions would be somewhat more perceptible. By then the price of gasoline would be up around 90 cents a gallon, and most drivers would be cutting down a little. But by that time there will also be at least 10 million more cars on the highway than there are today, and it would be some time in the next decade before the country's total demand for gasoline actually began to turn downward.

Mr. Carter is, of course, trying to keep economic disruption to a minimum and avoid the kind of shocks that hurt investment and employment. He's also trying to avoid exacerbating the regional conflicts that he mentioned on Monday. There are practical necessities here. A gradual program that Congress will pass is preferable, you might argue, to a sharper one that it would kill. But several questions come immediately to mind.

First: How long will it be, under this program, before oil imports stop rising and begin to fall?

Second: What does the United States do in the meantime about the threats of inordinate price increases abroad and the possibility of embargoes? "Our nation's independence of economic and political action is becoming increasingly vulnerable," Mr. Carter declared, accurately, as he talked about oil imports on Monday. Is he now suggesting that the country will have to tolerate that vulnerability, and even let it increase further, until some time in the next decade?

Third: There are three different rebate systems in the President's plan. Exactly how are these very large flows of money to be redistributed? The White House has suggested that part of these new revenues might be used to pay for welfare reform or to replace revenues lost through tax reform. The suggestion is apparently intended as an inducement to Congress. But does it mean that the rebate and redistribution issues are still wide open?

Now is the time to raise fuel prices, and particularly the gasoline tax. It needs to be done in an orderly fashion, but without the long delays that Mr. Carter contemplates. If the present national risk is as great as he described it on Monday, it requires a far more active response than he is now proposing.

The Washington Star (April 23, 1977)

"Getting Off the Oil Binge"

The novelty of President Carter's energy saving plan is threefold: the revivalistic air with which he urges it, the sharp turn from voluntarism to interventionism, and the coherence of the package itself.

Congress has reacted to the trumpet call with the usual applause for good intentions, coupled with much hedging about particulars. Sure, they say on Capitol Hill, the incentives for building insulation and several other easy features can be managed. Otherwise, it's easy to spot the tender spots that could keep Congress dawdling till Christmas and beyond, while the fine edge or urgency wears off. In

approximate order of political difficulty, they are the standby gasoline tax, the proposed pricing and taxing policies for oil and natural gas, and the supertax on "gas guzzling" autos.

We might pause here to note, before the righteous indignation over our wasteful habits thickens, that for whatever fix we are in—or about to be in—federal policy is not blameless. For decades it has been U.S. policy to subsidize inordinate dependency on private auto travel by building a magnificent system of interstate highways and urban throughways, to allow the passenger railways to go to pot, to keep the price of natural gas artificially low, and by a variety of means to ransom the general economic health to the 4,000-pound auto styles of Detroit.

What Congress has so long permitted—and sometimes even promoted in the name of giving us what we "want"—it can reverse, but only by adopting energy legislation with bite. It is irrational, as President Carter argues, to go on using oil and gasoline as if these were renewable resources, and as if our growing servitude to foreign suppliers did not jeopardize future economic stability and American freedom of action in the world.

Is this news? It is not. We first learned of the wolf at the door in 1973, but since that date the wolf has grown steadily larger. "The U.S.," James West of the Federal Energy Administration has recently written, "celebrated its Bicentennial in 1976 by going on an energy binge. In March the nation for the first time imported more oil than it produced. During several weeks, foreign petroleum imports exceeded domestic crude oil production * * *. By the end of 1976 the U.S. was importing 42 per cent of its oil needs, as compared with only 29 per cent before the embargo." Thus the problem, succinctly stated.

This waxing dependency puts the U.S. economy and its foreign influence ever more *en pris* to the uncertain future, and to the equally uncertain whims of foreign oil magnates.

The question arises, then: Why not emphasize new domestic production instead of conservation? We do not know an official answer to that question; yet one plausible answer may be drawn from this fact: that while the dependency has gone on growing, we have lately reached "near record levels"—Mr. West, again—of domestic oil and gas exploration. Thus the incentives for exploration seem not to be as deficient as some congressional critics of Mr. Carter's program would have us think. We do agree, however, that it is unwise of the President to menace the oil industry with possible presidential support of horizontal divestiture, scarcely the way of encouraging long-term investment and exploration.

The choice may be this—to take now the conservation measures Mr. Carter recommends, or others as effective, or to try with uncertain success to stimulate new domestic production which, without disincentives to prevent waste, might only reinforce our petroleum binge. This is not to say that new incentives would be a bad idea, or that the regulation by taxation Mr. Carter emphasizes is a good one—only that incentives will not break the cycle of dependency and may only postpone the day of reckoning.

The President's program, it should be emphasized, is not a program for the spartan life, although some of the things he said last Monday night may have hinted so. It is essentially a program to stabilize our

thirst for oil at about the present level, at least into the 1980s: merely to keep it from growing.

We will have more to say, as the discussion continues, about the measures the President proposed, including some of the more controversial. For instance, one would like to see the evidence that the standby sliding tax on gasoline would indeed depress demand significantly, since it is almost certain to work a hardship on low and lower-middle income people who depend on their cars to get to work. Of the package as a whole, however, it can be said now that it has the virtues of coherence and timeliness. The cry that it is lacking on the incentive side may be in point; but for the reasons stated above it smacks of stalling and of refusing to meet the problem of foreign dependency head-on. Of one thing there is no doubt: We shall have to begin weening ourselves from an elixir whose supply is far from bottomless, and much of it far away and growing costlier by the year.

Florida

The Miami Herald (April 22, 1977)

"Energy Plan Is Not Perfect, But Its Message Rings Clear"

President Carter's energy message to Congress sorts out the priorities, maps the plan of battle and assigns responsibilities. This, we think, is its peculiar virtue. Now, finally, everyone knows one-two-three what is the problem and where are the solutions.

Mr. Carter used the words of William James earlier in framing the challenge to the American people as the "moral equivalent of war."

The philosopher said something more on the same occasion, the unveiling of a monument: "Democracy is still upon its trial. The civic genius of our people is its only bulwark."

The Carter program calls heavily on that genius. The principal needs are three: conservation, development and conversion.

Another is fairness. There can be no fairness, though, in a retrogressive (although small) tax on gasoline. The point is that it is conditional on a reduction in gasoline used, and that it is postponed until there can be some reading of progress made, if any.

We think there can be progress if the American people realize that we are in a race with time. Oil is a finite resource. It must be conserved until other forms of energy—and this is where development comes in along with conversion—replace it.

The Alliance to Save Energy quotes planners as saying that "at least 40 per cent of U.S. energy consumed in 1975 could have been saved through improved operating and maintenance efficiencies."

A leader of the Alliance, its founder Sen. Charles H. Percy, points out that "nearly half of the energy we consume is wasted. We burn the equivalent of 18 million barrels of oil a day at a cost of nearly \$250 million and receive nothing in return."

Will Congress buy the argument, devise and implement the laws, and accept President Carter's courageous leadership in an unpopular cause?

Already there are catcalls from regional and special interests. Texas and Oklahoma are leary of conservation and prices raised only as high as the international price of oil. Detroit is anxious about building non-

gas guzzlers and perhaps losing a year of production. Congressmen who are proud of their no-tax records fear the political impact of possible \$1-plus a gallon fuel.

On the other hand, Mr. Carter's bold program has excited world opinion, which seems anxious to emulate it. Americans at least should be flattered that this reaction puts their nation in a position of leadership of a common cause.

We hope, then, that Congress will adopt at least the key bits and pieces of the Carter energy package. It must look down the long road when current energy resources are exhausted and civilization as we know it with its freedoms could crunch to a finish.

The appeals indeed is to the "civic genius of our people." It has never failed us, but it might if it is abused by greed, ignorance and abuse of the very instinct of survival.

Sentinel Star, Orlando (April 22, 1977)

"Some Bad News for Floridians"

President Carter's energy message contains some bad news for Floridians.

Although his road to an energy solution is paved with good intentions and his goals are laudable, the plan he outlined to Congress is unbalanced. Fundamentally, it penalizes people with low income and high dependence on automobiles.

Also the administration proposal will weigh heavily on those states whose economy depends on tourism and summer vacation travel. Florida is right at the top of that list.

The high points of his message were:

An attempt to force down costs in home heating and air conditioning by rewarding use of increased insulation and increased use of solar energy.

A crackdown on gas-guzzling autos, pushing the American drive toward more energy-efficient, smaller models.

As for solar energy, it is an area in which Florida could set a national example. An all-out effort to convert to solar energy would go a long way toward saving diminishing fossil fuel and lessening the burden on home owners already staggering under excessive utility rates.

Conversion to coal for utilities and business, which is one of the underlying points of the Carter plan, might be more difficult in Florida than anywhere else. At present, there is but one electric plant in the state, in the Tampa area, which is capable of burning coal. Beside huge conversion costs for utilities, there is the expensive problem of coal transportation to be met. Both would be inclined to further hike the utility bills over what they are presently.

As for the low-efficiency, high-gas-usage big car, the President is on the right track. This part of the energy plan should have only a miniscule effect on our very important recreation industry.

Tourism, after all, is not dependent on 440 cubic inch engine limousines that get 10 miles to the gallon. If forced to, Detroit can provide autos big enough to bring the tourists to the Sunshine State and efficient enough to meet the gasoline usage standards.

Low mark of the Carter program was the proposed gasoline tax, however, which could reach 50 cents a gallon by 1987. This could severely impair the use of cars for recreational purposes.

Although he didn't actually spell it out, what Carter seems to signal is that only the rich will be able to afford to take a vacation. The wealthy 1 or 2 per cent of the populace can afford a big tax on a \$7,000 car or any amount of tax on gas even if it brought the price to the \$1.50 per gallon now prevalent in Europe. But the poor will really feel the brunt in those areas as well as other increases in energy costs.

There were two big disappointments in the Carter plan. While the conservation thrust was admirable, 1. There was no provision for development of mass transit as an alternative to the automobile and 2. Little emphasis was given to further exploration for both fossil fuels and development of alternative energy sources.

Carter had warned that parts of his plan would face opposition from different parts of the country and different special interests. He was right. Parts of his plan are contrary to the interest of Floridians, namely increased gasoline taxes and the absence of emphasis on developing mass transit. Hopefully, the ensuing congressional debate will correct the inequities.

The Tampa Times (April 22, 1977)

"Substitutes Needed for Oil and Gas"

President Carter's energy program has stressed conservation as its major goal. It is important that we stretch available energy sources as far as possible, but only to purchase time to develop energy alternatives.

Carter would attempt to limit the use of petroleum products through higher taxes. There is a wide area of divided opinion on the effectiveness of this approach. Individuals wealthy enough to purchase the large, "gas-guzzling" autos which Carter attacks are also wealthy enough to pay a higher price to operate them. And there are critics who voice legitimate doubts about placing more money in the form of higher taxes into the hands of bureaucrats who have no difficulty in discovering ways to spend whatever they can obtain.

Points of the Carter program which are most appealing include his references to stepping up domestic oil production, preventing windfall profits for oil companies, developing synthetic fuels, shelving the plutonium breeder reactor, speeding construction of conventional nuclear power plants, increasing oil industry competition and preventing oil companies from collecting unearned profits.

It is fully within the reach of existing technology to find a substitute for gasoline which, in many instances, could be cheaper than gasoline. However strides toward this goal will be limited as long as gasoline remains a relatively inexpensive product and oil companies are reluctant to separate themselves from huge investments in refineries designed to produce it.

Much has been written about the use of alcohol as a gasoline substitute or even in using it in concert with gasoline. Very minor adjustments of the existing internal combustion engine would be necessary to accommodate alcohol as a fuel. However, no major effort to develop alcohol as a fuel or other synthetic fuels has been made.

Carter is correct in asking that greater use be made of solar energy. The power of the sun is one of our greatest resources, however we make too little use of it. In states such as Florida and other areas of the South and Southwest, solar power could vastly reduce dependency on electric power generated by fossil fuels.

Members of the oil industry were disappointed because the President did not place greater emphasis on exploration for more oil and gas. This country does have additional domestic reserves yet undeveloped and they should be tapped.

There is, for instance, the promise of large oil reserves on the outer continental shelf. But the lead time for exploiting these resources is being extended by professional environmentalists who make a career of over-protecting any seemingly threatened plant or animal.

On the other hand, we do agree with Carter's emphasis on moving away from oil and natural gas as our major fuel sources. These are finite in nature and we must look to other energy sources.

The Carter program should be closely examined by Congress. But it must be remembered that we are facing an energy crisis and steps should be taken to keep this nation's productivity high and its standard of living as far advanced as possible.

Georgia

The Atlanta Constitution (April 22, 1977)

"Energy I"

When the Arab leaders of the oil producing nations of the Middle East zapped the rest of the world, including us, with an oil embargo in 1973 the cry was heard throughout our land:

We've got to do something. This can't be allowed to happen again.

Practically nothing was done.

When the embargo was lifted, everything went back to Business as Usual (but with higher prices, of course.)

One of Jimmy Carter's persistent campaign themes was the lack of action on conservation of energy and the search for new sources of energy.

Now President Carter, in a sobering talk to the American people and an address before a joint session of Congress, has proposed to do something. Quite a bit, in fact. (See below).

The Arab embargo of 1973 may be compared with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Both events told Americans in no uncertain terms that the world would never again be quite what it was before. We did something about Pearl Harbor. It remains to be seen whether the people will agree with President Carter's assessment of the energy crisis as "the moral equivalent of war."

Already he is under fire not only on the specifics proposed, but on whether there is indeed a crisis. There are even those who think he should have credited philosopher-psychologist William James with that quote about "the moral equivalent of war."

But the big question is: Will Americans respond to this crisis as we have to those in the past?

Put another way, the President is asking Americans to stop acting like ostriches with their heads in the sand. We are still merrily consuming energy, especially in the form of oil, at a prodigious rate. Slow down, the President says, for the sake of our children, our grandchildren, and, in a very few years, ourselves. We are literally running out of gas. Even the richest nation on Earth is dependent on the resources in that very Earth.

The President's specific proposals should be and are going to be debated intensely for some considerable time. On the whole they appear to be well thought out and equitable. One of the 10 principles the President cited as basic in his proposals was that "we must be fair, our solutions must ask equal sacrifices from every region, every class of people, every interest group." It is crucial that people feel this is being done.

Probably Congress will make changes in the President's specifics. But will Congress and the people accept the President's vividly presented sense of urgency? "The most important thing about these proposals," he said, "is that the alternative may be national catastrophe. Further delay can affect our strength and our power as a nation."

Strong words.

And a strong challenge.

Hawaii

The Honolulu Advertiser (April 20, 1977)

"Energy and Hawaii"

If Hawaii must sacrifice with the rest of the nation to meet the needs of President Carter's energy program—and that is only proper—it is also important how his goals will apply here.

The President has indicated he will strive for fair treatment around the country, and in Hawaii's case that means recognition we are the nation's only mid-Pacific island state.

So there are these points to be made to Washington by leaders here and our congressional delegation :

Hawaii is almost totally dependent on petroleum for its energy needs, and much of that is the foreign oil Carter wants to reduce. In this we are a special case.

Because of distance and environmental factors, conversion to coal for power need would be more difficult than in many Mainland areas.

Mass transit is not yet well developed here, a situation we share with other areas. More significant, Hawaii motorists don't and can't take the long pleasure drives possible on the Mainland. Relatively more of our driving is of necessity, so we don't have the same latitude for saving gasoline.

Tourism is not a luxury here, or in other U.S. resort areas for that matter. It is an economic necessity for a rather fragile economy. Moreover, we are islands dependent on air transportation, not only to and from the Mainland and around our State. There are no real alternatives, so we are dependent on aviation fuel supplies.

Carter is right in calling for storage of a strategic reserve of a six-month supply of petroleum. But Hawaii's reserves need to

be stored here where they could be used, not in salt domes in Louisiana, as has been proposed in Washington.

Just how Hawaii will contribute to the energy conservation so clearly needed is not completely certain.

Whether it's taxes or regular increases, we can expect to pay more for gasoline and oil-produced electricity—and more than much of the nation because of our heavy dependence on petroleum.

Hawaii is one place where smaller cars make special sense, and their use should be an accelerated goal of government policies. Furthermore, the energy situation should be a further stimulant to mass transit, including the proposed fixed-guideway system for Honolulu. Airlines may face more conservation procedures.

If we don't insulate homes against the cold, there are ways to do the reverse, improve air-conditioning or eliminate it in some cases.

Hawaii gives some tax advantages for solar heating, and they should be expanded on the Federal level, as the President suggests. In addition, we must push beyond some fairly promising early studies and experiments on alternate energy sources here. They range from the Big Island geothermal program to potential for greater use of bagasse and even seaweed grown in special beds and dried.

In summary, it seems Hawaii has a case for some kinds of special consideration because of our location. But we also have an obligation to balance that with our own kinds of conservation programs that demonstrate we are doing our part.

Idaho

The Idaho Statesman (April 21, 1977)

"Carter's Energy Realities"

President Carter promised Americans that he'd shock us with his energy policy.

He has more than delivered on his promise.

In a speech that showed a flair for old-fashioned political guts, Carter questioned most of the lifestyle we have long accepted by clicking off a series of energy proposals that, indeed, will test the mettle of the American people. He has served up the challenge.

But are we willing to sacrifice as he proposes? Will we pay the price? Will we now believe the energy crisis is real?

Only time will tell. Some will roll up their sleeves and get to work. Others will hang back, reluctant to believe that Camelot is gone.

It almost certainly will be Carter's ability to persuade the remaining doubters that will, in the end, determine if this nation can deal with the deteriorating energy situation in a way that goes far beyond the proposals outlined Wednesday night.

What he gave this nation was a plan really designed only to insure the situation does not get any worse while changing our attitudes and perceptions so that we can decide where to go from here.

Carter carefully intertwined not only the carrot and the stick, but also the scare. In fact, the way he presented his proposal is almost as important as the proposal itself. His carefully drawn sermon Monday night, the leaks to the press (some much more frightening than what eventually was presented), the heightened suspense, all were

designed to set a new tone for this nation, to force Americans to look at energy in a different way, to begin a long, hard adjustment to a new world with new needs and realities.

Carter's proposals include elements of the carrot to reward energy conservation, elements of the stick to make sure the conservation occurs. The enormous stick he used—taxes and increased costs for those who do not conserve—is both justifiable and understandable because recent history has shown voluntary conservation to be a pipedream. Before most people will conserve, they must face the likelihood of being hurt badly in the pocketbook.

Some Carter proposals deserve to survive the inevitable battle with Congress. Investment tax credits to stimulate energy conservation in homes and industry is an idea whose time is overdue. The same is true of mandatory standards for energy efficiency in home appliances.

Other proposals, while laudable at first blush, seem headed for tough sledding and leave us with some questions.

For example, he proposes changes in electrical and natural gas rates to eliminate reduced prices for heavy users and to encourage electricity use in off-peak hours. We wonder how such a proposal will fare in the various state utility commissions.

Carter proposes to keep the price controls on natural gas and oil, extend the controls to intrastate natural gas, then tax the commodities to bring the prices up to world market levels. His other option, favored by the oil and gas industries, was to deregulate the commodities and allow the prices to climb to world levels in a free market.

The effect on the consumer is the same either way, but under the Carter plan, the money goes into the government coffers and then back to the consumers, not to the industries. The industries already are beginning to scream, and they have some heavy-duty friends in Congress.

In discussing the rationale for increased gasoline prices, Carter did not speak to questions dear to the hearts of many Idahoans. Our farmers must have the gasoline to operate their machinery. And they cannot pay much more. How does the President plan to deal with this dilemma? Idaho is not a wealthy state. Yet, we need our cars to move across our vast open spaces. Must those who can hardly afford it pay increased prices for the gasoline needed just to live?

Carter had some harsh words for the auto, Americans' first love and the symbol of our mobile society. Under his plan, many Americans no longer would be able to afford large, gas-eating cars. And under his gasoline tax proposal, no one could afford to feed such a car if they did own one.

Perhaps of all the elements of his energy proposal, the effect on the family automobile is going to be the hardest to swallow. We love the freedom and comfort the big cars, motor homes and campers give us. Now it is proposed that we give up a piece of that freedom.

So Carter has drawn the line. The plan he outlined is intended to slow the growth of energy use to 2 per cent annually. But it is not a comprehensive energy policy.

We cannot conserve energy that does not exist, a situation we face in the 1980s and beyond. Carter mentioned research on uses of coal, solar energy and geothermal power as fuels of the future. We doubt the answer lies wholly in these sources.

We must come back to the energy issue again, from the fresh perspective Carter's program would force us to accept. Then perhaps we can plan for the future. Carter's plan is only for now.

Illinois

Chicago Daily News (April 21, 1977)

"Balancing Act on Energy"

President Carter has a tiger by the tail in his program to lead America through an era of energy limitation. The broad energy plan he set before a joint session of Congress Wednesday night was under attack on several fronts even before the details became known, and the congressional battles are likely to be fierce.

This is one of those cases where the need for sacrifice is clear and everyone is willing to accept sacrifice—as long as somebody else makes it. The key to passage of nearly every facet of the controversial program will lie in the perception of the public—and Congress—that the plan is balanced and the burden is equally distributed.

Yet the attempt by Carter and his advisers to balance the program has led to some proposals that look to be unfairly weighted, most particularly in the area of gasoline supply and demand.

The program bears down heavily on conservation, as it should. There would be rewards and penalties—the "carrot and the stick" principle—to encourage saving gasoline and discourage wasteful practices. Harsh controls, such as rationing, would be avoided if possible. But a stiff tax would be levied on heavy cars (the notorious "gas-guzzlers") and on gasoline, the gas tax increasing over the years if consumption failed to decrease.

To offset the penalties, in recognition that a gasoline tax would fall heaviest on low-income groups needing their cars to get to work, the administration proposes a rebate or tax credit. Buyers of small cars would also get a rebate.

This plan may satisfy the demand for economic fairness, but would it really promote the cause of conservation? A surcharge on gasoline is not likely to deter those well able to afford the added cost, and if it is to be rebated in some way, it loses its deterrent effect on others as well. The rebate falls into the category of income redistribution—a new form of transfer payment—rather than supporting the conservation drive.

The essential partner of conservation is an increase in petroleum supplies, and the Carter plan promises too little on that score. Deregulation is to be approached only gingerly, with the price of oil (and natural gas as well) held below the world market price for some time to come. But hesitation in encouraging exploration and development of domestic oil supplies could leave the United States at the mercy of foreign suppliers until the time comes when all the world's oil runs out. A truly balanced program would give equal weight in the near term to production and conservation.

The total Carter package will require much study and debate and compromises are inevitable as that process goes forward in Congress. But at least a beginning has been made. Carter has met his deadline and fulfilled his pledge to produce a comprehensive energy plan. That in itself is a feat not to be underestimated.

Chicago Sun-Times (April 20, 1977)

"Straight Talk on Energy—Stresses Conservation"

Just after President Carter ended his Monday broadcast confronting Americans with the needs to change energy habits, to sacrifice and to conserve, one TV commentator said, "It's been a long time since we've seen anything like this out of Washington."

She was talking about leadership, Carter is showing it again. As with human rights, amnesty, nuclear dangers, free trade and other issues, the President is giving the country direction on its undeniable energy problems, despite the controversy his forthcoming energy plan could generate.

It's the kind of thing Presidents are supposed to do. It's the kind of challenge—asking individuals not to be "selfish or timid if we hope to have a decent world for our children and grandchildren"—Carter's predecessors didn't do or didn't do well.

Carter did not pretend that entering a new energy era will be easy. But in listing the 10 principles on which he has based the specific plan he'll announce Wednesday, he said "this can be a positive challenge." It can be, if people will not fear change.

He said America again can set "a positive example." It can. It can end wasteful habits that needlessly drain supplies. It can be a better steward of the limited resources all people must share.

Evenly distributed sacrifices will be a key to success. Too often, as former Interior Sec. Walter J. Hickel once agreed, government agencies have been in "the pocket of big business." Sacrifices fell to others.

Carter stressed fairness: "No one will gain an unfair advantage through this plan." It's been a long time since we've seen anything like that out of Washington, too.

Leadership: it's especially welcome now.

Details of President Carter's energy package will come Wednesday. But as he indicated Monday, revealing the principles on which the package is based, conservation will be stressed. It should be. Though this country outproduces others—and that uses energy—it also tolerates too much waste.

When, as Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) notes, "Nearly half the energy we burn is wasted," there's a duty to conserve wisely—and to begin doing so quickly.

Gasoline waste is a big concern. Cars and trucks account for about 40 per cent of the oil used in this country. Carter hopes to reduce gasoline use 10 per cent. But his expected request for a fuel tax is under fire already, though a new Gallup Poll finds about 40 percent of the public saying it would not be hard to reduce its driving by one-fourth.

For many motorists, hardships would be relatively minor if noticeable at all. In any event, the changes Carter is expected to ask Americans to join in accepting are not necessarily changes to dread.

What should be dreaded is the "national catastrophe" Carter said he foresees if Congress and the public somehow fail to act in the face of dwindling energy supplies.

In nearly all areas, waste occurs. That's ethically repugnant. Many of the world's people are energy-starved. It's also self-defeating. Some experts warn that without changes, energy demand will outstrip the

world's known oil reserves about the time today's 10-year-old reaches age 40.

Carter has warned repeatedly that a tough energy policy was coming. Few doubt that it is needed. Now, though parts may be altered, it must not be dangerously delayed or sidetracked by ignorance or partisanship.

Chicago Tribune (April 22, 1977)

"Energy: Too Little on Supply—And a Bigger Bureaucracy"

President Carter's proposals for a national energy policy rely too much on curbing demand and consumption and too little on increasing domestic supplies of natural gas and petroleum. The President should have called for the gradual deregulation not only of natural gas prices, as he promised in his campaign, but also of petroleum prices.

That would help achieve conservation by allowing prices more nearly to reflect the true cost of replacing present supplies. Market-oriented prices would also provide producers with the capital and the incentive for more drilling. A sensible policy would also insure that producers plow increased profits back into petroleum, natural gas, and other forms of energy production. Profits not used for energy development could be taxed away.

Instead, Mr. Carter's plan would tax petroleum producers so as to raise prices to world levels—set by the foreign oil cartel—and would pass the revenues on to the government, which would then return part of them to the public through rebates. That is backward, since it is neither the government nor the public that needs the money for exploration and drilling. The Carter proposal is regressive also on natural gas. It would regulate the heretofore unregulated intrastate price and do little to increase supplies.

The demand side of the President's scheme, on the other hand, has several good elements. Taxing gasoline, "gas guzzling" autos, and other energy-inefficient machines and appliances might succeed in restricting the growth in U.S. demand for energy. It might insure a little more time than will perhaps actually be needed to bring into use energy sources to replace finite supplies of petroleum and natural gas. That would be desirable for this nation's economy.

But the program is so one-sided as to be self-defeating. It contemplates stiff taxes to conserve gasoline, but nowhere suggests that the resulting revenues might be used to improve alternatives to the highway—such as mass transit—or railroad trackage.

But very likely the chief failing of Mr. Carter's plan is that, by concentrating so heavily on holding down demand rather than increasing supply, it may end up paradoxically making us even more dependent on foreign energy sources. That could drive up the cost of nearly everything and could jeopardize our economic growth without the compensating promise of increased domestic oil and gas supplies.

Thanks to what appears to be a paranoid fear of the free market, the Carter administration has produced an energy bill that would not only do little to encourage the development of new sources of energy, but would inevitably depend for enforcement on a gigantic, costly, and oppressive new bureaucracy.

And so we find an administration which was elected on a promise to streamline the federal government proposing a plan which would have

the very opposite effect. In fact, the White House staff has already grown by about 30 percent since Mr. Carter took office.

Oh, we know that Mr. Schlesinger, the federal energy administrator, and other White House spokesmen deny that a new bureaucracy would be required. But if there is not to be an increase, then how are all the new controls going to be policed?

To say that a bigger bureaucracy won't be necessary is to suggest that the new controls won't really be enforced at all—that people will go through all of the prescribed motions and fill out all of the required forms and that their work will then be filed away in warehouses, never to be seen again, or perhaps even thrown away like the dividend reporting forms which corporations have been submitting to the Internal Revenue Service at great expense.

Instead of moving toward the free market, as industry and most sensible economists have been urging, the Carter administration is inviting the worst of both worlds: tough and politically unpopular conservation measures plus tough and unpopular controls which may end up making the conservation measures futile.

For example, Mr. Carter is not calling for the deregulation of the price of natural gas, even though he once promised to do so. On the contrary, he is calling for a new ceiling on the price of gas which, though higher than the present one, links the price of gas to the price of fuel oil and applies the new ceiling to gas sold within the producing state as well as beyond its borders. Does anybody seriously believe this can be enforced without thousands of new payrollers?

Similarly, the incentive to produce new oil is based not on the free market, but on another intricate formula based on world prices. Who would police this? And who would police the complicated schedule of taxes and rebates attending the purchase of new cars, based on the fuel consumption of the cars? Who would determine the fuel consumption?

We're told that much of the suffering caused by higher fuel prices would be offset by higher credits for the poor on income tax returns and by direct payments to those who don't file income taxes. This sounds alarmingly like a reincarnation of the late and unlamented tax rebate—a scheme to distribute alms about the country without any apparent relationship to whether the beneficiaries pay for gasoline or heating oil.

In short, Mr. Carter has called courageously for temporary sacrifices and would now impose a new array of agencies and controls whose long run effect, we suspect, would be to make those sacrifices permanent. And once again, the country is asked to suffer in order to gratify the ego of planners who think they can outsmart the free market.

Indiana

The Indianapolis Star (April 20, 1977)

"Mr. Carter on Energy"

President Carter's so-called "sky-is-falling" address to the American people over television Monday sounded strangely unAmerican.

It was full of gloom, doom and hand-wringing—qualities Americans by and large have never tolerated. Certainly the United States has

prospered not because its people were constantly bemoaning their lot but because they were tough, resilient, inventive, productive.

Productive. But that was the element so remarkably absent from Mr. Carter's remarks. And he left unsaid too many other things germane to his topic—depletion of world oil resources—to avoid suspicion his purposes were ideologically [rather] than factually motivated.

We're going to run critically low on petroleum products within a decade unless we make sacrifices, was the burden of his talk, and this would have wretched consequences for ourselves and our children.

Sure enough. But the Carter emphasis on conservation as the only immediate, rational solution falls woefully short of a full facing of the problem.

His only reference to frontier-area oil exploration, for instance, was in the context that this of necessity would entail some sort of crash program. It need not, of course. And the U.S. is behind other countries in this type of development only because of endless government red tape and judicial meddling—something Mr. Carter omitted saying.

Then there was the talk of converting power generation from oil to coal, when converting back would have been the way to put it. Not long ago coal was the almost universal fuel used in generating electricity. But government-imposed environmental regulations forced a radical change from coal to oil—something else Mr. Carter failed to mention.

In fact the Carter talk fell into the all-too-common habit of smugly throwing onto the American people the onus of getting the nation out of a problem—not the only one—which government almost exclusively has brought about.

Mr. Carter's warning against waste was apropos, but when has such warning not been? Waste can never be justified—of oil or anything else—and unfortunately every society has its wasters. On that score, though, the answer is to get after the wasteful, not to insinuate the label should be pinned on more or less everyone.

It remains to be seen what Mr. Carter will propose to Congress in specific terms to implement what he called his comprehensive energy program. If he calls for far less government and far more private initiative, he can count on American ingenuity and enterprise to make the program a success.

If, as seems far more likely however, he asks for even tighter constraint of virtually everything to do with oil and energy in general, the end result could be the very gloom and doom he was at pains to warn against.

Iowa

The Des Moines Register (April 22, 1977)

"Minimal Energy Program"

The energy program outlined by President Carter in his message to Congress is comprehensive but not oppressive. So many rebates, tax credits and phase-ins are written into his proposals that no one should suffer much. If the country cannot accommodate to this sort of program, it deserves to run out of gas on its collective freeways.

The cornerstone of the Carter program is conservation—but without change in the nation's way of life. The proposed switch is not from

private to public transportation—the words “mass transit” were not uttered—but merely from big cars to smaller ones. And those who paid the price could continue to buy wasteful, luxury models.

Conservation has enormous potential, and Carter is right to make it the central feature of his program. Presidents Nixon and Ford all but ignored the energy-saving potential of conservation and emphasized production, although utilization of known methods of saving energy could save the country the energy equivalent of 30 million barrels of oil a day by the end of this century.

Congress needs to move quickly on Carter's program, if only to eliminate uncertainty. It's conceivable that the President's promises of rebates and tax credits could retard energy-saving moves instead of stimulating them. Americans should be told they won't be penalized by insulating now or by buying small cars now by missing out on the tax and rebate advantages. Retroactive consideration also should be shown Americans who didn't wait for tax breaks to curb the waste of scarce fuel.

The President's program has so many facets that Congress can't be expected to take overnight action. But this is hardly a new subject. The President has not asked for such revolutionary measures that they must be debated endlessly. Carter's program actually is the least that should be done, and Congress should act on it before the summer is out.

Kansas

The Topeka Daily Capital (April 27, 1977)

“Energy Program Must be Fair”

President Carter said he wants his energy program to be fair to everyone. That is laudable—but will be difficult to accomplish.

Already there is talk of “necessary exemptions.” James R. Schlesinger, Carter's energy adviser, says some areas, such as New York City and California, with severe pollution problems, will be exempt from mandatory conversion of plants from gas and oil to coal.

If that were done, of course, Kansans might claim exemption, from the added gasoline taxes—because we must drive long distances and have less mass transportation than New York.

Parents of large families would ask exemption from taxes on gas guzzling cars because they need larger models to carry their children.

If we start granting exemptions, the system will break down.

Whatever rules are made should be enforced on everybody alike.

If it is practical to take tax money away from gasoline buyers and car buyers and return it in tax rebates, this should be done nationwide.

If it is necessary to stop burning gas and oil in generating plants and factories and substitute coal, which seems probable, this should be done in California and New York, just as in Topeka and Kansas City.

“Scrubbers” have been developed to permit coal use without excessive air pollution. Eastern coal and that from Wyoming should produce a minimum of pollution. The government should require plants all over the nation to convert from natural gas and oil to coal as quickly as possible.

Kentucky

The Courier-Journal, Louisville (April 20, 1977)

"Carter Prepares the Nation for a War it Must Win"

In its 200 years, this nation has met its greatest challenges with courage and with willingness to put the country's survival above narrow self-interest. But the challenge President Carter laid before the public Monday night is unique in our history.

The energy crisis, as he effectively demonstrated, is as serious a threat to our future as any of the great wars that tested our national resolve. An impending catastrophe that could destroy both our economic and political institutions isn't hard to visualize if we don't act now to stop it.

But this time there are no Kaisers, Hitlers or Stalins against whom to rally the nation. The enemy, in simplest terms, is ourselves. The test is whether we can rally against our own bad habits, shielded as they are behind the twin legions of politics and business as usual, and reinforced by our historic assumption that our resources are unlimited and progress is just a matter of heading down the same old road.

President Carter presented the problem in plain language. We are using up the energy resources on which our living standards depend at a rate that cannot possibly be sustained through the lifetimes of even the middle-aged among us.

If world consumption of oil keeps rising as it has in the past, as the President noted, all of the proven reserves of oil everywhere will be gone before 1990. Long before that, unless corrective measures are taken, the scarcity of fuel will make current OPEC prices seem like a bargain-basement dream.

The President could have cited many more grim statistics than he did in his brief address Monday, which was only a scene-setting preview of the specific programs he will present to Congress tonight. The CIA report also released Monday was only one in a series of convincing indications that we can't rely on new discoveries of oil and gas to relieve us of taking strong measures to conserve the energy we have and find new sources.

How the public, and especially that portion of the public that controls our energy resources, will respond to the President's call is far less certain than how it would respond to enemy bombs and bullets.

The response so far gives little reason to cheer. Special taxes on gas-guzzling cars, Detroit has already told us, might dislocate production and cause unemployment. No matter that a million workers were idled last winter.

Louisiana

The Shreveport Times (April 22, 1977)

"Carter's Proposal—Some Good, Some Bad"

President Carter's wide-ranging energy policy proposal would do a lot to decrease demand, which is good, but not enough to increase supply, which is bad.

And from that conclusion, an obvious recommendation can be drawn: It would not be wise to embrace the whole plan with no

modifications, but it also wouldn't be very smart to throw out the whole thing and start over.

Mr. Carter's complicated package deserves a full, fair hearing with the Congress and the American people because, whatever its virtues and faults, it is the first comprehensive federal approach to solving this nation's energy problems—which is the No. 1 priority, bar none.

How much of the plan actually goes into effect and how much gets scrapped will be matters of lengthy debate and high tempers, most likely, but Mr. Carter has at least called the federal machinery to attention. The task will now be addressed, not ignored.

It is a big plan, no doubt about that, with multitudes of taxes, rebates and regulations supposedly designed to bring U.S. energy consumption and production into balance. Even the President's address to Congress Wednesday night did not contain a full account of his proposed policy, but dwelled instead on major points that will concern the most people.

Mr. Carter's proposed taxes on gasoline and "gas-guzzling" big cars will probably be the most controversial item with the American people, because this taxation will hit almost every one of us. It is geared to consumption: If U.S. gasoline use increases by one percent or more during the next year, federal tax would be raised from four cents to nine cents per gallon in 1979. If consumption increased again that year, the tax would rise to 14 cents per gallon. After that, from 1981 to 1987, if gasoline consumption does not DROP at least two percent a year, the tax would go up in five-cent increments, reaching 50 cents per gallon eventually.

It's a drastic-sounding proposal, and has already drawn fire from labor and agriculture groups, who protest that the tax will hurt workers and rural residents, while wealthy people simply pay the price and go on wasting gasoline. Mr. Carter proposes to take some of the sting out by returning the new energy taxes to the people in the form of rebates, but he can still expect strong opposition on any gasoline taxation plan. He has also requested standby authority for emergency gasoline rationing, if that becomes necessary.

Before the outcry becomes too great, it should be pointed out simply that something must be done to get Americans to burn less gasoline. If not Mr. Carter's taxing plan, then some other form of mandatory conservation must be used to cut the nation's wasteful consumption. That's going to be uncomfortable no matter how it's done, but it's necessary.

The next most controversial section of the plan, and the one that disturbs the producing sector the most, is the President's blueprint for oil and gas pricing. He hopes to raise oil prices to the world market level—the price rise to act as a conservation incentive—but he wants to do it through taxes, not decontrol. His reasoning, again, is that taxes could be returned to the people, whereas decontrol would only allow windfall profits for the oil companies.

There is a certain populist nobility to that thought, but it fails to acknowledge a point that has already been argued to death: If oil producers are to explore and develop new fields, thereby increasing the flow of domestic oil to meet American needs, they must have the huge capital required to finance exploration and drilling. Those "windfall profits" so abhorrent to some people are largely plowed right back into

research and development to produce more energy. Production of new energy must be the partner to conservation measures if this energy crisis is to be solved.

The Carter plan does encourage development and use of coal, an available domestic energy source acknowledged to be in good supply, and it encourages uranium-powered nuclear energy, along with development of solar energy for homes and businesses. But in the meantime, we are still an oil-and-gas society, and we must encourage—not discourage—petroleum production to keep that society going while alternate energy sources are developed.

It almost goes without saying that a strong energy program is going to have some inflationary effect on the nation's economy. The real question is, how can inflation be minimized while we try to establish an effective conservation-production balance in energy? This much we all know: Any change in energy pricing or taxation is going to be felt throughout the economy. The world economy is still reeling from the Arab price changes which started four years ago, and any U.S. action could have similar effects if it's not very carefully handled.

Those preliminary criticisms of President Carter's program are by no means intended as an attack on his proposals. They are made only to indicate areas in which the plan can be adjusted. What we all face now—the President, the Congress and the American people—is a lot of hard work to come up with the best program to meet our energy needs.

The Times-Picayune, New Orleans (April 20, 1977)

"Conservation as Resource"

The energy situation is going to get worse every day until we act, just as President Carter told us Monday night. He proposes that we act in ways that involve sacrifice, and of course no one likes sacrifice.

It is certain that our supplies of oil and gas will run out—and Mr. Carter is attempting to make it later, not sooner. So arguments that oil producers are hiding reserves are moot. If there are hidden reserves, we will simply run out a little later than predicted.

"Conservation is the quickest, cheapest, most practical source of energy," President Carter told the nation as he pegged conservation the "cornerstone" of the energy policy he will present to Congress today.

His policy contains ten main principles, and one the consumer will not welcome with open pocketbook is increased energy prices. But again Mr. Carter is on solid ground when he reasons that "we are only cheating ourselves if we make energy artificially cheap and use more than we can really afford."

True, Americans are used to buying on credit and living beyond our means, but buying energy on the installment plan involves an eventual and unpleasant repossession. While energy prices have increased rapidly in the past few years, they were so artificially low for so long that even now energy costs do not reflect the inflation that has occurred in housing, food and other essentials.

Mr. Carter is calling for sacrifices from every region, every class of people, every interest group, and he knows that all of these will attack his plan. The time has come for the American people to under-

stand that, just as we get old without liking it, so must we learn to sacrifice. But many old people will tell you that the golden years are not that bad, and countries such as West Germany, Japan and Sweden can tell us that they enjoy our same standard of living using one-half as much energy per person.

While Presidents Nixon and Ford gave lip service to energy conservation, President Carter is the first to propose a real program. If a strong energy policy is not adopted, the American people will know that we have Congress to blame, not our President.

Maine

Kennebec Journal, Augusta (April 22, 1977)

"Energy Maturation"

A month or so ago President Carter remarked that a recent poll had given his administration a 70 per cent rating "but when we come out with our energy policy we will probably lose about 10 or 15 per cent of that."

No doubt disillusion, disbelief and outright hostility will set in as the energy screw tightens on the individual, but reaction so far seems to be one of acceptance and even admiration for a leader leading in the face of personal unpopularity.

When the Arab crunch hit during the Nixon era there was considerable resentment expressed that the President was so unsure of his own position, had so shallow a faith in Americans that he could not and would not demand sacrifice. Now we have a President who warns us that we are going to have to govern our appetites, and who expresses confidence that we will do so. Only a fraction of U.S. energy goes into the production of things; most of it is used by individuals for comfort and convenience—furnaces, automobiles. These are soft spots in our armor and it is these soft spots that Mr. Carter's policies will poke and prod regardless of our squeals. So far we like the idea of being told we must grow up.

Maryland

The Sun, Baltimore (April 21, 1977)

"The Bite That Hurts"

President Carter has shown courage, wisdom and a sure sense of where the nation's priorities lie in proposing a severe and comprehensive energy package. Congress need not—and should not—accept his specific proposals without examining the alternatives that will be offered in abundance. But legislators will be answerable to the voters if they go home this year without enacting an energy program that, in its totality, is at least as convincing as the 4,500-word document the President offered at last night's joint session. "It is a thankless job, but it is our job," Mr. Carter pointedly told Congress.

For three years, the country was witness to the shocking spectacle of a virtual standoff between a Democratic Congress and a Republican President. The arguments were mainly partisan and ideological, but the result was ever greater dependence on foreign oil supplies that

drained national treasure and threatened national security. Now Americans cannot afford another impasse, this one blatantly reflecting selfish and regional interests, or the cravenness of legislators unwilling to ask voters to accept austerity for the good of the country.

Although the administration has tried to be fair to all citizens, the plain truth is that any energy program with bite is bound to hurt certain citizens more than others. Mr. Carter's proposed tax on gas-guzzling cars may do damage to auto companies and auto workers. Higher taxes on domestic crude oil and the standby gasoline tax could be a special burden on workers who have to drive long distances and to people living in rural areas. The President's call for higher natural gas prices, together with rules forcing companies and utilities to shift to coal, is sure to cause dislocations. And so it goes, as the cries of anguish rise from boardrooms, union halls and the chambers of Congress.

Good arguments can be made to provide more funds for oil and gas exploration, for example, or to assure that environmental regulations do not undercut the new emphasis on coal. But alternatives will deserve serious consideration only if they demonstrably will work as well or better than what the administration has to offer. They cannot be dealt with in isolation, but as part of a coherent whole.

During his first three months in office, Mr. Carter has displayed a flexibility that has bordered on wobbliness. He called for a \$50 rebate, then retreated when it became an obvious nonstarter. He issued a "hit list" canceling expensive water projects, then whittled it down more than a third. He offered only modest farm price supports, then raised them substantially under pressure. These were marginal questions that perhaps cried out for accommodations toward Congress by the new President.

But on energy Mr. Carter will have to stand his ground and fight until he and Congress produce the kind of legislation that will safeguard the nation's future. The President deserves respect for moving with determination to address a problem that, in his own words, threatens "national catastrophe." His real test, however, has only just begun.

Massachusetts

The Boston Globe (April 22, 1977)

"The Energy Package"

The comprehensive energy conservation package presented to Congress by President Carter contains very few surprises. The Administration has been careful to leak virtually all of it to Congress or the press in forms that have allowed the public to see—and react—to the plan.

The fundamental concept of the program is sound. Using the tax system to raise prices on scarce energy sources like petroleum and natural gas is reasonable enough. So is the idea of taxing inefficient users of energy, the gas guzzlers.

So is the idea of developing programs for converting oil- and gas-fired electric power plants to coal wherever feasible. And adding insulation to homes, developing a national petroleum reserve and making domestic appliances efficient cannot be faulted.

There will surely be an enormous debate over the specific contents of the bill. It is impossible that all of Congress, or even a majority of its members, could embrace such a massive program without expressing reservations.

The irony is that some features of the bill may not go far enough. The excise taxes on gasoline and large cars, for instance, may not be big enough to discourage consumers. But the Carter package does establish the principle of the taxes and enactment of the principle may be the most important step to take right now.

The bill also raises at least as many questions as it attempts to answer.

The President proposes tax credits for investments in home insulation and solar heating units, for instance. But the credits will presume that the investment has actually been made. But many persons living in poorly insulated homes may not have enough money to buy the insulation and claim the credit—yet another misfortune for lower-income families.

But the energy proposals are not insensitive to the requirements of lower-income families. President Carter's gas-tax proposal is closely coupled with the idea that proceeds from the tax should be returned to the general public "in an equitable manner," suggesting that Congress will be asked to weight the rebates in favor of those with lower incomes. This kind of rebate is really social rather than energy legislation but it is crucial if the President's fairness objective is to be met.

The greatest danger to the program lies in Congress. There will be strong temptations to enact the pleasant parts of the package—subsidies, tax credits and tax rebates—without enacting the unpleasant aspects of excises and controls. This is a time for Congress to accept the unpleasant with the pleasant.

Congress should be very careful to avoid one will-o'-the-wisp concept—that "enough" money will solve the supply problem of oil and gas.

We have 30 billion barrels of proven reserves of oil and use about 6 billion barrels a year. There is more to be found in Alaska and offshore—but not enough to change the fundamental fact that we are very close to the end of the rope in terms of domestic petroleum. The Carter program addresses that reality by encouraging conservation and gradual shifts to other fuels. It may have flaws, but it is a serious move in the right direction.

Michigan

Detroit Free Press (April 22, 1977)

"Energy Policy Is Tough; Inaction Would be Worse"

According to at least one poll, approximately 80 percent of the American people say they support the idea of a strong energy policy.

Thus, if President Carter had chosen to preach a sermon on the need for an energy policy, it probably would have been well received. But what we saw Wednesday night was not a sermon by the Baptist from Plains, but a lecture on hard and unpleasant facts by the engineer from Ann Arbor.

And predictably, there is far more division over the specifics than there would have been had the president chosen simply to stick to

political rhetoric. Most of the alternatives that can really make any difference are going to hurt.

The only chance the president has of persuading the country and the Congress to accept any substantial portion of his tough policy is by pointing out, repeatedly, what the risks of doing nothing are. Shall we sit around until our oil runs out? Can we really rely on the idea that incentives for production can produce enough oil and gas for us to go on as before? Would we prefer to go on at our present rates of consumption until we have to accept mandatory gasoline rationing, or mandatory controls on where our thermostats can be set?

For our part, we accept the president's basic definition of the problem. The oil and gas reserves, foreign and domestic, are probably not available *at any price* for us to go on as we have. Therefore, the conservation emphasis is not wrong at all, but dead right.

The new emphasis on the use of coal, our most abundant fuel for now, is right, though the risks of adverse environmental impact will have to be carefully managed and monitored.

Mr. Carter's reluctant acceptance of nuclear power, with a hard-nosed insistence on * * * for the importance of the safety * * * seems to us unavoidable *and* defensible. His emphasis on solar research is well grounded, and his proposed incentives will give some force to his argument.

The heart of the near-term part of the program, of course, is the part that is most threatening to us here in Michigan and the part about which the most debate must occur—namely, that related to the automobile. Is the so-called gas-guzzler tax really unavoidable, and will its gradual introduction not disrupt employment in Michigan and other states where dependence on automobile employment is heavy? Will the gasoline tax, even though it is a stand-by provision, really deter fuel waste?

Is the impact of the program on the poor and the middle class going to be minimized? Is it tolerable?

Clearly, the automobile is so important a part of our energy use that it must be strongly affected by any program that is going to work. The gasoline consumption simply must be reduced. The auto industry itself has already started substantial moves in that direction. The president would speed up that process, however, to a degree that will be painful to us here in Michigan.

Some system of incentives for energy-conserving cars and penalties for energy-wasting cars is essential. It will be important that Congress weigh the impact of this on employment, particularly in Michigan. But the principle that those who choose cars that are inefficient should pay extra for that privilege seems to us to be defensible.

Now, the debate will begin in earnest in Congress. There will undoubtedly be many adjustments before any plan is enacted. Some of the Rube Goldbergish character of the president's tax proposals, for instance, may have to be changed. Let us hope that both Congress and the president can be persuaded to take seriously the potential effect on employment in this and other automobile states.

But this much is certain now. The president has courageously laid out a comprehensive program. He has made the case that a comprehensive program is needed. If Congress and the people do not like or accept

parts of it, they and we must recognize that we cannot do so on the basis of mere special pleading.

For any clear reading of the national interest must tell us that we have temporized too long on the energy question. Whatever we do has risks for our present way of life. But the issue that Mr. Carter was trying to drive home is that doing nothing holds far greater risks for us, and that somehow, painful though it may be, the long process of adjustment to the new energy realities has to begin in earnest.

The Muskegon Chronicle, (April 26, 1977)

"Road to Energy Independence Ruttled, Rocky"

The great debate has started over President Carter's call for national "sacrifice" in an all-out battle against energy waste.

The program outlined would affect every segment of society, and each can be expected to attack what it doesn't like.

There are plenty of targets.

We salute the President for having the courage to face the toughest challenge his administration will face between now and 1980—convincing Congress and the public that the nation does indeed face a grave energy crisis and, whatever the costs, that something serious needs to be done about it.

For the record, we are convinced. The crisis exists.

At the present rate the world by the mid-1980s will use more oil than it produces, and this country has no choice but to move rapidly to energy independence or face an economic threat of catastrophic proportions.

Will his program meet the challenge? And, whether or no, can he sell it?

There is doubt on both scores, and this certainty—that the key to acceptance of virtually every part of the program will be a clear public perception that the plan is balanced—fair to all, with no one segment of society, or region, or industry asked to bear a disproportionate share of the burden.

Clearly, the President tried to do this with his system of rewards and penalties—the "carrot and stick" principle—to, for one thing, encourage saving gasoline and discourage wasteful practices.

He plans to levy a heavy tax on large cars—the Michigan-made "gas-guzzlers" now selling so well—and a tax on gasoline, the gas tax increasing over the years if consumption failed to decrease.

The gas tax would fall most heavily on the low-income group needing their cars to get to work, and so, as an offset, the President proposes a rebate or a tax credit, and a rebate as well for buyers of small cars.

Is this fair? Is the gas-guzzler tax *absolutely* necessary? Will it not cause severe unemployment in Michigan and other states heavily dependent on automobile employment? If this results, as expected, would it not require a disproportionate sacrifice by the people of Michigan, and by an industry that employs one-sixth of the nation's workers?

We have problems with all of that—and so will Mr. Carter. We think we know some of the answers. And they don't sit well.

If the gas tax, tied to rebate, is conceded to be fair, will it do what Carter hopes—contribute significantly to the goal of cutting gas consumption by 10 per cent by 1985?

We doubt it.

We don't think that a gas tax of only 5 cents annually to a maximum of 50 cents if consumption exceeds stated targets will do the job. It won't start until 1979 at the earliest, and for many motorists a 5-cent or 10-cent tax would not be prohibitive.

Other motorists, those not able to handle the added costs, would get the rebates. But if the added tax costs are going to come back to them in the form of rebates or tax credits, where is the incentive to conserve?

Where is the element of compulsion in a system that takes with one hand and gives back with the other?

The ultimate effect would not be conservation, but a redistribution of income.

A successful effort to cut gas consumption by 10 per cent within nine years will for the most part depend on improved automobile mileage. But while calling on the automakers for improved mileage, Carter also demands improved standards for auto tailpipe emissions.

The presidentially endorsed new auto pollution standards could, according to one federal study, increase gasoline consumption by nearly 15 billion gallons over a nine-year period.

The promulgated standards are roughly comparable to California's current standards, and cars sold there are getting about 12 per cent less miles per gallon than those sold in the other 49 states where the standards are less stringent.

That's conservation? The conflict is obvious. If the standards are adhered to, there would be some improvement in air quality, but at what cost to consumers in sharply higher car prices?

Carter would expand coal production by two-thirds, to 1 billion tons a year, to cut consumption of oil.

Fine, but how?

Environmental restrictions on mining, particularly on strip-mining, and on coal transportation and use by utilities and industry, are the chief reasons we've ignored coal (in plentiful supply) and relied on oil.

If we're going to dig deeply into our vast coal reserves, those restrictions are going to have to be substantially modified. That, plus a major national effort to build the rail cars to transport those billion tons a year.

The President plans to increase nuclear-generated energy, but there are problems of fuel supply which, unless he unscuttles the nation's breeder reactor program, make it difficult to see how the problems can be solved.

The plan calls, necessarily, not just for conservation but for production as well, particularly for finding and exploiting new sources of oil and natural gas.

The answer here—certainly it should be tried—is complete deregulation. The Carter plan moves a few hesitant steps in this direction.

That is not enough.

What is proposed will keep the oil and gas industries under a system of price controls that holds prices below those paid to the Arab and other producers, and removes any incentive for anyone to try and find out whether our domestic production can be increased.

Remove the controls. Let the marketplace work.

We've touched on enough, we think, to indicate that the road to energy independence is going to be a rocky one.

It's not impassable, but it's clear that safe passage is going to require a lot of patience, trade-offs and compromises between environmentalists and those seeking energy self-sufficiency, and full public awareness that the crisis can be met only at a cost to the environment and to the consumer.

Minnesota

The Minneapolis Star (April 22, 1977)

"A Gutty Energy Program"

President Carter has said what the nation needed to hear about energy and he has offered a gutty and comprehensive program to do something about it. We admire the reach and sweep of his proposal and his political nerve. We hope Congress will respond with equal vision and courage. And swiftly, too.

Carter has correctly focused upon conservation to an extent that neither Nixon nor Ford did. "Our first goal is conservation," he said, because it is the "cheapest, most practical way to meet our energy needs . . ."

Easy to say, and other have said it, but Carter went beyond the rhetoric with proposed taxes on inefficient cars, a standby tax on gasoline, incentives for weatherizing buildings, a requirement that public utilities offer weatherizing services to customers, an upcoming executive order requiring strict conservation efforts in federal buildings, public works money for weatherizing state and local government buildings, a reform in utility rate structures and stringent efficiency standards for household appliances.

We support all of those except the standby gasoline tax. We don't think it will be high enough to have any lasting effect on gasoline consumption and we don't like the implications of pricing low-income people out of the gasoline market through artificially-imposed taxes. We also think the proposed tax on inefficient cars will have to be substantially higher than proposed to get the desired effect.

Carter's program is not as laudable on the supply side of the energy equation. He does not go far enough or fast enough in deregulation of pricing on oil and natural gas, and the government's heavy and clumsy hand would not be lifted or made miraculously adept.

But he is correct in seeking ways to increase the use of coal and he is eminently practical in recognizing the need for a significant increase in nuclear power generating capacity. At the same time, he says we don't have to take the chances associated with the nuclear "fast-breeder" reactor; we hope his assessment is correct.

Carter also would provide incentives for people who buy approved solar-heating equipment. He called solar energy the "most promising" new energy source with "much of the technology . . . already available." We don't know whether his proposed incentives are good enough, but he's pointed the right way.

This is a complicated proposal which invites nit-picking from all sources, including editorial writers. But it must be judged in its overall context. In that sense it is better than anything we've seen before.

Mississippi

*The Clarion-Ledger (April 25, 1977)**"Getting At Waste"*

President Carter could scarcely touch all the bases in his energy address last week, but any program that proposes to be fair and to concentrate on waste must include some restrictions—or at least disincentives—on recreational use of fuel.

The President's proposals are not only extensive but complex, and it may be that this scarcely necessary use of a limited commodity will turn out to be covered.

However, an Associated Press dispatch later in the week indicated that recreational vehicles may emerge relatively untouched by the energy pinch. Mr. Carter did not directly address RVs in his address Wednesday night.

These vehicles include motor homes and campers, snowmobiles, dune buggies and a variety of other vehicles.

While a case can be made for motor homes, there seems to be little reason to spare the others penalties for wasteful use.

Nor did the President's proposals deal with whether taxes or other penalties will be assessed against consumption by pleasure boats, private planes and the sport of auto racing.

However, recreational vehicles built on a truck chassis alone number about 10 million, and last year sales soared 30 per cent over 1975. Additionally, the larger vehicles get only 9 miles per gallon, definitely falling under the President's definition of "gas-guzzlers." Apparently, these RVs would be included in a truck category.

Carter's only reference to trucks was to direct Transportation Secretary Brock Adams to propose fuel-efficiency standards for trucks weighing between 6,000 and 10,000 pounds. Once standards are set, Carter presumably could propose taxes on trucks that don't meet the standards, or rebates for those which exceed them, as he did with autos. One suggested goal for trucks is 17.6 miles per gallon by 1985.

A spokesman for the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association has said that he thinks the industry can get truck manufacturers to meet whatever fuel standards are set.

The Carter energy package is a complicated combination of pricing mechanisms, tax incentives and fuel conservation requirements, and it may even be more complicated—and possibly vastly altered—when it comes out of Congress, if it does.

The chances are Congress will pass some kind of energy program. While examining the President's proposals, members should attempt the possible—that is, adopt a plan that is most likely to invoke the fullest cooperation of the public in such a way as to assure maximum conservation.

One of the best ways to do this is to penalize wasteful and unproductive consumption without penalizing essential use.

Missouri

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (April 21, 1977)

"Blueprint For Conservation"

At long last a comprehensive energy policy has been offered to the nation. In his address to a joint session of Congress last night, President Carter outlined in considerable detail his plan for a more efficient and balanced use of energy resources. The President has spelled out the general dimensions of the problem in his fireside chat Monday night, namely, dwindling supplies of irreplaceable oil and natural gas, so the task last night was to explain how best to conserve the remaining supplies of these two resources and how, in the process, to move to greater reliance on coal, solar power, geothermal power and nuclear power.

To conserve oil and natural gas, Mr. Carter wants to rely primarily on higher prices. What differentiates his proposal for higher prices from his two predecessors' is that he would use taxation rather than unregulated increases by energy producers. The advantage of the Carter approach is that the taxes that cause the higher prices, which presumably then would discourage consumption, can be used for the public good instead of private profit. In Mr. Carter's plan, the public good would be served by refunding most of the taxes to consumers.

Such a return to the public of tax revenues, which could amount to more than 57 billion dollars a year in 10 years, is not only necessary from a political point of view but essential if the economy is not to be subject to the possibility of depression. Nonetheless it is disappointing that the President did not propose retaining some portion of the fuel taxes to finance an enlarged mass transit system, which would logically seem to be part of an energy conservation plan. In fact, however, Mr. Carter did not even allude to mass transit as a factor in reducing reliance on gasoline.

Notwithstanding the absence of a mass transit component in his plan, Mr. Carter presented a comprehensive blueprint for conservation and, for that reason, it is bound to offend virtually every special interest in the nation. That raises the possibility that the separate interest groups will have the collective effect of denuding the entire proposal, leaving the country with a token conservation policy and, as a result, setting the stage for real economic dislocation instead of the across-the-board acceptable sacrifice envisioned by the White House.

Indeed, the plan is striking in its emphasis on fair treatment for everyone affected by it, and if it seems that the automobile has been singled out for special demands it is because the automobile consumes nearly half the oil burned in this country. To fail to concentrate on the auto, through mandatory fuel efficiency standards, higher gasoline taxes and punitive taxes on inefficient cars, would simply be unrealistic.

It is noteworthy that the President envisioned a gradual phasing-in of virtually all his proposals for new taxes, stricter efficiency standards and conversion to new fuels, the idea plainly being that the economic

impact would be less severe. The higher gasoline tax would not begin for two years, appliance manufacturers would have two years to meet new efficiency standards, utilities would have even longer to abandon oil and natural gas for coal, and there would be ample time in which homeowners and businesses could take advantage of tax incentives to install insulation and storm windows.

It is noteworthy, too, that in a message detailing the need for conservation of existing sources of energy and the development of new ones, the President repudiated the breeder reactor, though he clearly did not eschew greater reliance on nuclear power in general.

If the President's timetable for conservation, conversion and development of alternatives to oil and natural gas is no crash program, that does not mean the energy problem does not require urgent attention. Rather it means that the kinds of adjustments he is asking the nation to make cannot be made abruptly, though they can certainly be made without lowering our standard of living. Mr. Carter has outlined a plan that is reasonable, feasible and, above all, predicated on the irrefutable fact that, as he told Congress, "we can never increase our production of oil and natural gas enough to meet our demand." In short, there is no alternative to conservation.

Montana

The Independent Record, Helena (April 26, 1977)

"Carter's Energy Plan Is at Least a Start"

President Carter unveiled his much heralded energy plan last Wednesday night. He followed it up with a news conference on Friday. Then, on Sunday the major networks devoted most of their morning interview programs to Carter's proposals.

Carter's plan is far from popular. He is calling for an oil-less or at least a less-oil society in America, something that is going to be hard for the American consumer to comprehend.

Previous Presidents and Congress have been fighting over an energy plan ever since the Arab oil embargo of 1973-74 and until last week nothing definitive had been proposed and nothing at all had been accomplished.

Carter's program is complex. He would gradually raise the prices of oil and gas up to world market levels. But he wants to capture the difference between cheap and expensive oil entirely through higher taxes and then to return those taxes to the public—but not penny for penny.

The transition to a less-oil economy would also be promoted by higher well head prices for crude oil, higher taxes at the gasoline pumps and a raft of specific financial penalties, such as for using gas guzzling cars, and some rewards, such as for using more efficient automobiles.

Carter's energy policy will have tough sledding in Congress. Congressmen will be listening to their constituents, who are bound to oppose the plan, as well as the gas, oil and automobile lobbyists who will be pushing for modifications to benefit them.

The President's energy policy is basically sound. Right now the most important thing for all of us to realize is that the energy crisis

is very real. Our resources are finite. A certain amount of sacrifice is inevitable—and probably the sooner the better.

Dilly-dallying on the part of Congress will tend to pacify the public and prolong the implementation of a sound energy plan. We must all realize that for better or worse a less-oil society is on the horizon and do our part to ameliorate the situation.

New York Times columnist Tom Wicker poses some tough questions in his energy quiz elsewhere on this page. It's worth reading and thinking about. How you answer those questions will provide a clue as to whether Carter's program will work.

We hope it will.

Nebraska

Lincoln Journal (April 21, 1977)

"The Need Now: Followship"

The knife-like character of objections to President Carter's comprehensive energy program, including those voiced by Nebraska politicians and personalities, says something important.

And terribly, terribly depressing.

Critics are willing to shoot holes in a massively balanced strategy touching all working points and nerve ends in defense of their own generally narrow economic interests and conveniences.

That's what's so depressing, and ultimately threatening to the health of the United States.

Disturb us not, they say. Let us be fat, dumb and happy. Until the final evening bell tolls.

Particularly horrid to the critics is a meaningful federal tax on gasoline to depress demand, or encourage more fuel-efficient motor vehicles.

The fact is the President's gas tax recommendation, with its income tax rebate feature, is about as mild a prospective levy as anyone serious about the subject could concoct. If we had our druthers, the proposal would be for a tax of at least a dime a gallon right now—cold turkey. That would be for openers, too, to gain requisite attention.

Conservation of only one gallon of gasoline a week for every car in America would save 5.3 billion gallons in a year's time. Those cars now burn 73 billion gallons annually.

But perhaps some would rather wait until the stuff runs out completely, or we give the oil producers \$100 billion a year, or until gas rationing is the exclusive option.

Incentives and penalties, rewards and constraints, and especially trade-offs form the skeletal framework of the administration's program.

A gasoline tax would fall heavier in rural jurisdictions with scattered populations, like Nebraska. Yet those in the Northeast whose home heating basis is heavy fuel oil would be smacked harder on that item than we in the Plains.

Pluses and minuses in a truly comprehensive plan tend to wash each other out, thus creating relative equity and fairness, which is the situation here.

There are features of the President's permanent battle scheme, other than failure to propose an immediate gas tax, which excite very

lightly. The dominant theme of a gradualism could be used easily as a popular, and hence Congressional, excuse for more delay. Emphasis on nuclear power expansion is more than disquieting.

In the end, however, this is a far better national response to the energy challenge than that submitted by any previous President. Until a superior and more rational alternative is presented, The Journal commends fellowship behind Mr. Carter's leadership.

To do so seems plain common sense. And, even if some judge it corny, a demonstration of love of country.

Nevada

Nevada Appeal, Carson City (May 8, 1977)

"Finding Answers to Gas Guzzlers"

President Jimmy Carter has declared war on the energy crisis. And the first target to fall under his line of fire is one of America's sacred cows—the large automobile. The President's concern is well-placed. Make a list of the country's big energy wasters and the four-wheeled dinosaur is at the top.

So who's fault is that?

At today's prices, it's for darn sure that people don't particularly enjoy feeding their 8 and 9 mpg gashogs. There's probably not a person around who hasn't wished out loud more than once for a reasonably-sized vehicle that would deliver 25 mpg.

One of the biggest frauds perpetrated on the American buying public in recent years is the Environmental Protection Agency's mileage rating for new vehicles. All EPA mileage estimates are overly optimistic if not simple bare-faced lies.

The editor, a year ago, bought a car that the EPA promised would get 22 mpg in the city. He gets 14 on the highway and feels lucky. After a year of adjustments and alibis from mechanics, it has never improved.

By assuming that everyone who buys a large vehicle is on some kind of contemptible ego trip, President Carter is maligning millions of Americans who bought to supply specific needs or to answer the call of commonsense.

Is the man with a wife and five kids being irresponsible when he buys a nine-passenger station wagon?

Are the Lake Tahoe residents who drive in bad weather six months out of the year, being gluttons when they opt for pickup trucks and four-wheel drives?

Is the retired couple, who blew their life savings on a motor home in which to live and travel, being selfish?

We say "no" on all three counts.

We have queried several auto accident experts—not the least of these being the editor's wife. Her mid-size domestic wagon was pranged twice in less than three months (both times while stopped for traffic) and she credits her double-mortgaged hunk of Detroit iron with keeping down the amount of damage—to her and the car. And she's probably right. She saw two compact cars take turns demolishing themselves against her rear bumper—mute testimony to the fact there is indeed a difference.

But you don't have to take the editor's wife word for it. All the statistics books will show you that people in large, heavy cars survive more handily in a serious collision than do folks in the compacts and sub-compacts. Carter has apparently neither read the statistics nor talked to the editor's wife.

By threatening to tax and penalize those who drive gashogs and reward those who drive gas-powered beercans, we feel President Carter is coming down on the heads of a large group of Americans who have already been victimized.

If he wants to bad-rap somebody, why not attack the EPA for lying year after year in its mileage charts? Every vehicle owner in the country already yearns earnestly for a reasonable vehicle with a decent mileage performance and has been victimized at least once by the EPA and the salesmen who promise more than they can deliver.

A 1977 mid-sized car with Detroit's latest clean air devices has a true mileage performance that can't beat a 1927 Reo. Is that really as far as we've come after 50 years of research and development? Japan has been out-pointing Detroit in both mileage and emission controls for several years now. Is this too the fault of the consumer?

We're convinced President Carter can find bigger and more rewarding targets in his war against gasoline consumption than the poor souls who make safety and convenience a part of their vehicle-buying criteria.

New Hampshire

Concord Monitor (April 20, 1977)

"Era of Energy Sacrifice Ahead"

President Carter has told the nation in blunt terms it must scale down its standard of living or stand a chance of losing it within a decade.

It was a forceful message he delivered Monday night, one that should not have been news to anyone. But he will have to say the same things repeatedly in the weeks, months, and probably years ahead for the full impact to be understood.

We've relied on oil and gas for 75 per cent of our energy, and we're running out. There are no adequate alternatives in sight, and we're going to have to conserve to survive. He called it "the moral equivalent of war"—a quote from pragmatist William James.

The President was scheduled to spell out the details of a program to meet this crisis in a speech to a joint session of Congress tonight. And it's in Congress, where special interests reign, that the opposition will develop.

Mr. Carter's program is expected to call for heavy taxes on gas-guzzling automobiles, and another hefty tax on gasoline to discourage its use. He's expected to urge a switch from oil to coal, which is in abundant supply. There'll be more emphasis on solar energy—but that is a long way off.

In the meantime, the key is conservation.

The U.S. imports more than 40 percent of its oil and wastes more than that. Yet imports of foreign oil have risen and reliance on domestic supplies has dwindled. We are becoming increasingly dependent upon foreign oil, and thus more vulnerable to blackmail.

Even if Americans were willing to give up some of their opulence, the world supply of oil is only enough to meet the demand for another six to eight years. After that, the demand will out-strip the supply and the worldwide fight for energy will be joined.

What the President is saying is that we can plan for the immediate future now by conservation and the development of new energy sources—without “plundering the environment”—or we can say sacrifice is for the other guy and face economic and social catastrophe in the 1980s.

A similar picture was apparent three and a half years ago, though it was not so bleak. Former President Nixon called for energy independence four years ago, but it went nowhere.

We set up energy agencies—more than 50 in the Federal Government alone—and state agencies galore, to little avail. The New Hampshire agency spent its federal funds re-electing Gov. Thomson. That's how seriously the crisis was taken here.

What President Carter said, in effect, was that no program will succeed until it hits people where it hurts. And if the outlines of his program are any indication, it will call for sacrifice from us all, and especially those who can afford it.

Americans are victims of a “plenty” syndrome. We over-eat, over-drink, over-smoke and keep ourselves over-warm. We use twice the energy of West Germans, the Japanese and the Swedes, as the President cited, and yet our standards of living are about the same.

We need a dose of self-discipline. We have to break our gorging habits if we're going to survive in a world of diminishing resources.

The President's program probably will give a shot in the arm to the short-range development of nuclear energy. That may be a bright light for construction of the proposed atomic plant at Seabrook, but nuclear energy as a major source in the future is improbable.

There probably will be added emphasis on the development of mass transit in urban areas and other schemes to cut down automobile traffic. Solar energy should get a research boost, and so should ways to extract coal other than strip mining.

The President spelled it out Monday. His words will affect us all for the rest of our lives—happily if we harken and disastrously if we don't.

New Jersey

Newark Star-Ledger (April 22, 1977)

“Buying Time”

President Carter has made the hard choices in an energy conservation program simply because there were no easy ones available if this policy is to be effective.

Politically, the President did not spare himself as he called for a spartan energy initiative that will have wide ranging impact on the American way of living in the next decade.

The next move—and a crucial one—is up to Congress. It will have to display the same political fortitude that Mr. Carter showed by his draconian energy proposals.

The President proposes, the Congress disposes. But it should be eminently clear that in this instance at least, the legislative branch must begin to deal with the energy problem in a responsible, energetic man-

ner. The United States no longer can afford to vacillate and procrastinate in this critical area.

There are, of course, negative implications in the Administration's energy policy. But they must be equated with long-term positive aspects, the principal one being to develop a capacity to get along with lesser dependence on foreign oil and gas as these supplies dwindle over the next decade.

In essence, the Carter plan buys precious time for the United States, a holding process during which this nation must make an extensive commitment to develop alternative sources. There are enormous coal reserves available that will have to be more fully utilized in the future; there is offshore oil to be tapped; we must concentrate our advanced technology in expanding the use of solar power. These are areas that are keys to America's energy demands in future decades.

In the meantime, it is essential we adjust to the reality that we must learn to use available energy in a more efficient manner to offset mounting costs. It does not necessarily mean that we will have to radically alter our style of living. But we will have to undertake more practical modes—extensive home insulation and drive smaller but more efficient cars.

But this is a small sacrifice when measured against the ultimate goal of economic survival. At the same time, the United States would be setting an example for the rest of the world on the need for urgent conservation, reversing its traditional image of a voracious Goliath that consumes 30 per cent of the world's energy with only five per cent of its population.

New Mexico

Albuquerque Journal (April 20, 1977)

"Plan Tough to Sell"

President Carter's "unpleasant talk" about the "greatest challenge our country will face during our lifetimes," was probably the most pleasant part of the grim task he has accepted: that of bringing the nation to grips with the energy crisis.

His Monday night address to the nation was convincing to most, and it should not take long to make the conversion unanimous, for his categorical statements are backed by 20 years of scholarly documentation.

His hardest task will be to sell his package of hardships and unpopular proposals—to be unveiled in detail before Congress today—to the vote-conscious members of the U.S. Senate and House.

Already, senators and representatives from oil-producing states are complaining that the President's opening salvo did not place more stress on production.

What they failed, or refused, to recognize in the President's address was the thinly veiled message that the role of petroleum fuels as the nation's prime source of energy must be deemphasized. There also was a message to his critics in the automotive industry that the role of the automobile as the nation's prime means of transportation must also be reduced to a secondary role.

His comparison of the energy crisis to the threat of war also carries the strong implication that the disciplines normally invoked in a war-

time crisis may have to be invoked to bring the nation in line with the seven goals he enumerated. It is a safe prediction that the overwhelming majority of the nation's rank-and-file is not going to fall into line voluntarily.

Although the specifics of the legislative package he will present to Congress will not be known until today, there have been enough trial balloons, deliberate leaks and broad limits to disclose their general nature.

In advance of those specifics, we must take a dim view of the use of the federal government's tax powers as a disciplinary measure. It is a fact solidly supported by history that excise taxes will not reduce the consumption of gasoline or other petroleum products.

Local governments, states and the federal government have long known that taxes on tobacco products, gasoline and alcoholic beverages are a reliable source of a predictable amount of revenue, for taxes have never had a downward impact on rates of consumption.

Yet our exception to the tax approach is not without qualification. A substantial tax on the more popular energy fuels would be particularly palatable if the revenues thus generated were earmarked to produce a long-term solution to the energy problem. We refer particularly to federally-sponsored research aimed at the development of feasible and economic alternatives to petroleum.

The nation and its dynamic industries still have a lot to learn about the potential offered in the nation's vast coal resources as a source of liquid and gaseous fuels; the unlocking of "tight" geologic formations for the release of trapped oil and natural gas; alternate automotive fuels and lubricants; efficient systems for harnessing wind, solar and tidal energy; practical and low-risk approaches to the use of nuclear energy; conversion of wastes and by-products to energy fuels, and the resolution of public safety and environmental problems associated with the production and utilization of fuels.

New York

Democrat and Chronicle, Rochester (May 23, 1977)

"What More Does Carter Have To Do?"

What does President Carter have to do to persuade people that the energy crisis is for real?

Order all federal employees to ride bicycles to work?

Impose gasoline rationing?

Turn away the tankers?

These are legitimate questions in the wake of such statements as that made the other day by House Ways and Means chairman Al Ullman (D-Ore.).

The President's energy program is in trouble in Congress, he said, because the "sense of urgency" has not been driven home.

"We still have not the sense of urgency that I feel the situation warrants. I get the feeling the people in the country and in Congress are not fully aware of the nature of the crisis."

So whose fault is that if not of the Congress and the people? If they're not aware that time is running out on us, it's because they don't

want to listen, because they don't want to be shaken out of comfortable habits encrusted by decades of plenty and waste.

Mr. Carter has painted the picture very plainly.

One trouble, alas, is that the strong colors on his canvas have been diluted and watered down by politicians and special interest groups.

Senate minority leader Howard H. Baker Jr., when he visited Rochester a month ago, in effect dismissed the President's warnings by talking of huge untapped reserves of oil and gas. (Questions that we raised editorially about the sources of his information have so far been unanswered.)

Such contradictions are being used as a reason for doing far less than we ought to be doing.

How much longer are we going to allow ourselves to be distracted from the job ahead?

If we don't believe Mr. Carter, then what of the most recent warning sounded by the 15-nation Workshop on Alternative Energy Strategies. The study released simultaneously around the world, stated bluntly:

Despite expected efforts by all industrial countries in the next 25 years to reduce energy demand and shift to other fuels, the non-Communist world will be faced—perhaps as early as the 1980s—with an annual oil shortage which will grow by the year 2000 to 15–20 million barrels a day or about the magnitude of current U.S. consumption.

This prospective oil shortage will occur even though coal production is more than doubled, nuclear power multiplied 15–25 times, the historic growth rate of oil demand is cut by more than half and the real price of oil rises 50 per cent * * *.

How can we possibly go on behaving as if there were no tomorrow?

New York Post (April 21, 1977)

"Carter's Challenge"

The infrequent applause and subsequent sniping that greeted President Carter's address to Congress last night should at least finally shatter the myth that the energy crisis is fictional. No President would have presented a program so plainly destined to arouse cool and even adversary response in so many sectors unless he were profoundly convinced that the country faced clear, deepening danger.

That may be the most meaningful aspect of this week's continuing presidential concentration on the energy front. For in a sense he has declared war—or the "moral equivalent" thereof—against an invisible enemy. No bombs have hit Pearl Harbor; there can be no dividends in the opinion polls from the somber message he is delivering as Americans relax in the springtime sunlight.

Conceivably, however, growing public appreciation of the political risk he has undertaken may help more than rhetorical plea to dramatize the urgency of his warnings. It could be a decisive factor in his battle to enlist the country in this long-range crusade for self preservation and independence.

We say this without any blanket commitment to the program he has projected. There may well be grounds for reasonable, responsible controversy about plans that can alter the lives of many citizens, raising

at once the threat—as Carter acknowledges—of both new inflation and unemployment.

But the reckless, demagogic attacks on his proposals already being heard are a disheartening omen. As Common Cause chairman John Gardner wisely observed:

“The President’s energy program requires sacrifices by everyone, yet each special interest is clawing away at the program to eliminate its particular sacrifice. If they succeed, the nation will suffer and we’ll be left wondering whether a free society has the guts to do any uncomfortable thing.”

In its overall dimensions, the Carter design embodies principles of equal sacrifice and justifies his description of being “fair” and “well balanced.”

As the Congressional debate evolves, we will have more to say about these and other specific points. We welcome both fresh, affirmative ideas and thoughtful dissent. But if the opposition can produce nothing better than a new demand to entrust the national future to the leaders and lobbyists of the oil and gas industry, it will neither receive nor deserve a serious hearing.

The New York Times (April 24, 1977)

“The Right Price of Energy”

For all its length, tables, omissions, exhortations and numbing complexity, the Carter Administration’s energy program proclaimed a single message: The price is wrong.

Americans are energy alcoholics. For half a century, we have reveled on cheap oil, gas and electricity. Not content with one car, we have bought two and three. Not content with toasters, we have generated a whole sub-industry to tantalize us with electric carving knives, crepe pans, cookie shooters. Natural gas is a premium home-heating fuel in limited supply; we use it to heat commercial boilers that could readily employ coal instead. But energy is worth more than Americans pay for it—and is rapidly becoming dearer still. If the revel continues, the morning after will be long and painful, indeed.

In his proposals last week, the President did more than intone the obvious sermon: Sober up. The central virtue of his program is that he outlined the way to do so: for Americans to learn the true value of energy by paying more for it. That remedy alone would be brutal, as we learned during the 1973 oil embargo. The sudden price leaps would bring extreme hardships for the poor, dislocations for almost everyone, and windfall profits to a few. President Carter recognized, as President Ford did not, that the price-increase remedy must be immediately tempered—with gradualism and fairness.

The Carter program calls for a new tax to increase the price of oil. But it would go into effect only over three years—and these revenues would not constitute windfall profits for oil producers. They would be rebated to the public. The price of new natural gas would be allowed to rise. But cheaper “old” gas would be allocated to residential and commercial users. A stiff new tax would be imposed on low-mileage cars—up to \$2,488. But high-efficiency cars would qualify for rebates as high as \$499. And a standby gasoline tax could, in time, add as much as 50 cents to the cost of each gallon—but only if total consumption

did not meet evidently reasonable national goals. And, again, the revenues would be returned to the public.

Each proposal is carefully upholstered. Indeed, some think the program is too cushy; what real sacrifice is Mr. Carter asking for? Nonetheless, under each cushion is the hard fact that Americans must get used to paying more for energy.

Only if they do, can the Administration expect success for two other major ingredients of its program. One is conservation, for which incentives are proposed, notably for home insulation. But the surest way to learn to conserve energy is to learn its true value. If it costs more, it will be regarded as worth more. The second ingredient is conversion—to coal. The Carter program proposes and depends on a massive return to coal in place of oil and gas. If the goals for coal are to be met without fudging on pollution standards, scrubbers will have to be used. And that, too, means higher prices.

There is a further, less obvious, advantage to the public's becoming steeled to higher energy prices. They make more economically attractive the development of alternative energy sources—solar, for instance—that will be essential to the nation's long-term energy needs.

However shrewdly the Carter program addresses energy pricing, it is studded with odd omissions and large question marks. Does it rely too heavily on coal and conservation and not enough on stimulating oil and gas? The proposed price increases for new oil and gas offer more stimulation than the Presidential rhetoric suggests. Still, it is puzzling that in so comprehensive a package there is not more discussion of energy production on public lands, notably the outer continental shelf.

The proposals for oil and gasoline tax rebates may constitute handsome cushions, but how will they work? In his news conference Friday, the President seemed, almost coyly, to suggest rakeoff as much as rebate. Does he truly wish to cast the Federal Government in the role of a race track operator, taking a percentage of the handle off the top before paying the taxes back to the public?

And is the President being wholly candid when he suggests that the prudent, fuel-conserving family can profit from the tax and rebate program? Will not higher fuel prices increase the cost of everything we buy, not just gasoline?

These and other questions will occupy Congressional and public discussion for months to come. Emerging facts, insights—and politics—may extensively alter the specifics of the ultimate program. Still, the President and his energy chief, James Schlesinger, will have done their initial work well if, in the end, the public at last finds the price that is right.

Wall Street Journal (May 27, 1977)

"The 'Energy Crisis' Explained"

The energy crisis is a snare and a delusion. Worse, it's a hustle. We're now prepared to explain it for once and all.

We would be the first to affirm that the subject of energy is enmeshed in a very real intellectual and political crisis. There is also a real national security problem, which deserves to be treated separately. For now, suffice it to say that the emergency stockpile program is the one good part of current energy policy, and that we really ought to stop

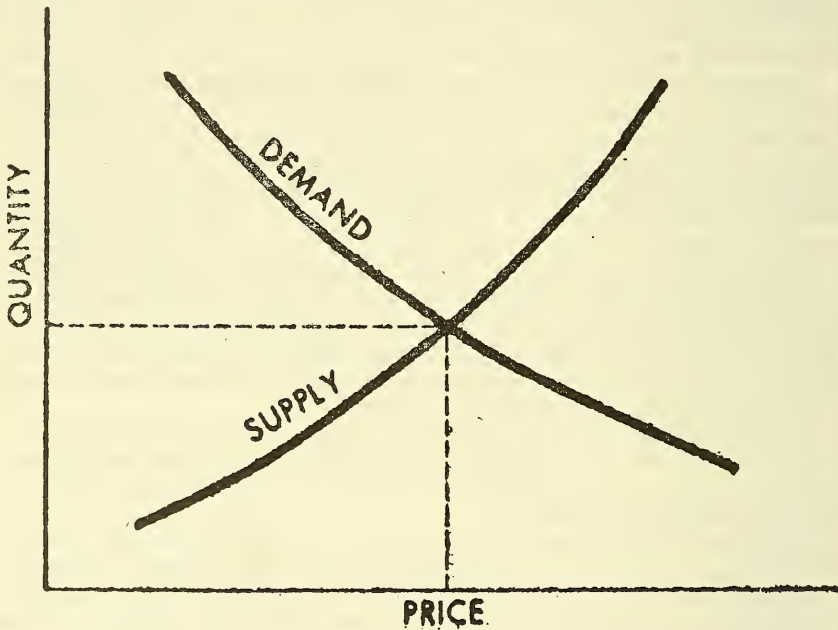
taxing domestic energy production in order to subsidize imports from OPEC (see Hall and Pindyck in the adjacent readings). But what "energy crisis" usually means is that one fine morning we will look on the shelf and exclaim, "My God, we've run out of energy." Then civilization will grind to a halt and we will all freeze in the dark.

This is nonsense.

The best way to understand why is to distinguish two views of the world the way economists do, which is to look at prices. Or you can look at the world the way inventory clerks do, trying to tally up the resources in the earth's crust.

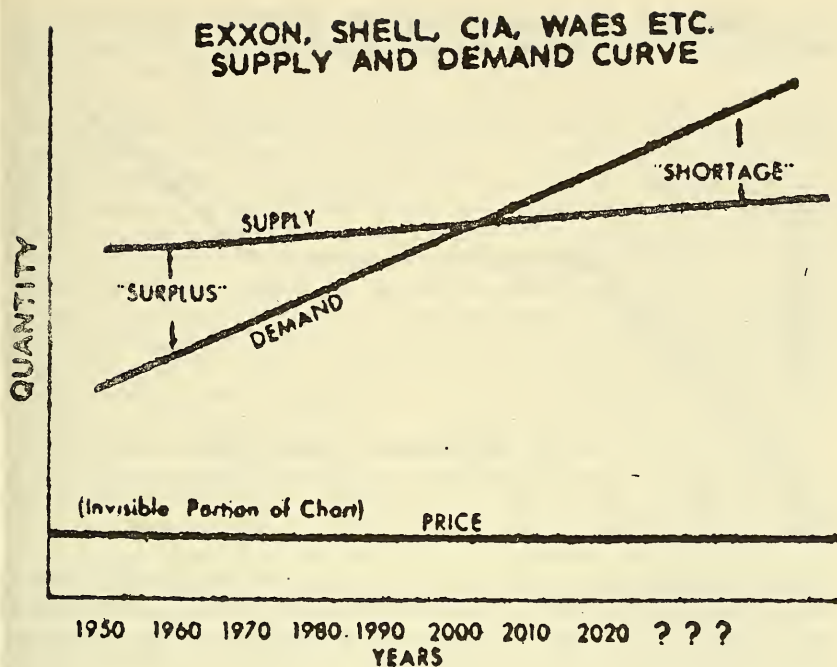
Economists, or anyway most of them, view the world like this:

SUPPLY AND DEMAND CURVES BEFORE CLUB OF ROME, ETC.



This view of the world has invariably worked in the past. At least, it is difficult if not impossible to find historical examples of commodities for which it failed. Nor is it suspended because a cartel someplace controls a lot of production. Higher prices still reduce demand and increase supplies, which is how cartels are broken.

Following the Club of Rome's startling discovery that the weight of the earth is finite, the public mind has been gripped by the inventory-clerk's view of the world. This view pervades not only the Carter administration's energy offices, but also the oil companies, the recent CIA study of resources and the MIT Workshop on Alternative Energy Strategies. In the inventory-clerk's world, there are "gaps" between supply and demand. Its version of the curves looks like this:



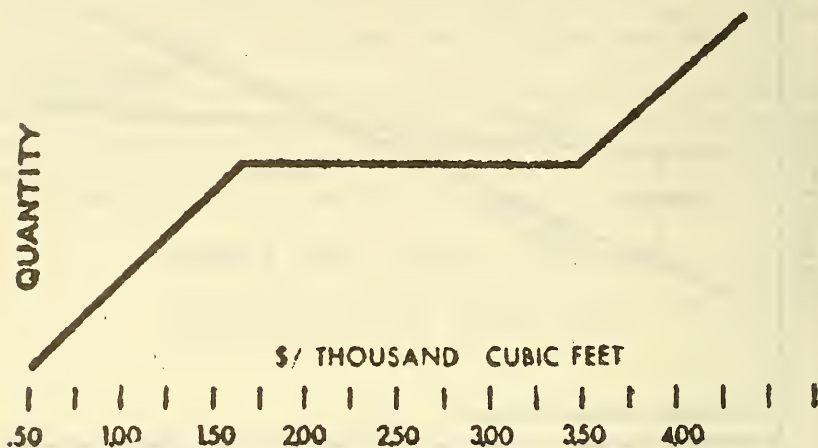
A number of things should be observed. First, in the inventory-clerk's world, prices never appear. But in those demand and supply curves, a price assumption is always implicit. We have drawn that assumption in the shaded area of the chart above, adding it to the usual version. It is the assumption that price will remain constant that causes the "gaps" between supply and demand.

Second, the inventory-clerk's view of the world is absolutely correct in one circumstance. It is precisely the way the world does behave when governments prohibit prices from moving to equilibrate supply and demand. It is in fact the way the world has reacted to control of U.S. natural gas prices.

Third, the inventory-clerk's view of the world is based not only on the truism that the amounts of oil, gas, uranium and so on in the earth's crust are finite, but also on the assumption that the clerks know what those amounts happen to be. Against their own better judgments, geologists do make such predictions; their track record is ludicrous (see readings). Of course, it is always conceivable that sometime the inventory clerks may be right. But to sustain the comfortable assumptions about its own infallibility, the Carter administration already has had to start suppressing natural gas reports by its own experts, as we have previously reported.

The current administration, in fact, is so confident about its geologists and inventory clerks that it knows not only how much energy is in the earth's crust, but what price will be necessary to call it all forth. Its policy for natural gas, for example, is based on the following supply curve:

CARTER ADMINISTRATION SUPPLY CURVE FOR NATURAL GAS



A natural gas price of \$1.75, far less than the energy equivalent of the world oil price, will be "sufficient incentive" to drain the earth of usual forms of natural gas. Once this is sucked out, the next source of gas will be synthetic gas from coal, which will cost \$3.75. To the inventory clerk, the policy prescription is obvious: You outlaw the sale of gas at prices above \$1.75, except that you subsidize the production of gas at prices above \$3.75. This is the Carter policy in a nutshell.

All of which brings us to the vested interests. We have seen this kind of supply curve before. In arguing for subsidies for plutonium recycle and the breeder reactor, the nuclear industry offers a uranium supply curve with the same zigs and zags—flat from \$40 a pound to \$125 a pound. In the sense that nothing in the universe is impossible, the actual supply curves may look just like that. But to us, the zig-zags look as if they were drawn by folks who are after a lot of taxpayer money. To breed plutonium at \$125, or gasify coal at \$3.75. Or worse, by folks who want protection from competition of gas at prices between \$1.75 and \$3.75. As we said, a hustle.

Now, down at Charlottesville the other day, Energy Czar James Schlesinger hectored the local free marketeers with a Mark II version of the inventory-clerk's argument, centering on the capital stock. Not only does he know the exact price "sufficient" to drain the last drop of natural gas from the earth's crust, he also knows exactly what must be done today to achieve the optimal capital stock in 1995. Come now. Allocating the capital stock is the job of the financial markets, and anyone who can outsmart them would be rich. The markets are the collective result of thousands of individual decisions; vagaries of human judgment wash out and facts prevail. They will always beat any individual, even as brilliant as Mr. Schlesinger.

To be specific, the administration proposals would require industry to invest enormous amounts of capital converting from gas to coal. If the suppressed natural gas report happens to be right, by 1995 natural gas is likely to be our most plentiful and cheapest source of

energy. Maybe the report is right; maybe Mr. Schlesinger is right. How many billions do you want to bet on one throw of the dice? How many per cent of GNP?

To meet energy or capital needs of 1995, we need above all a system that provides flexibility, that allows us to correct human mistakes gradually and without huge costs. Policies based on a static and conjectural inventory of the earth's crust, or on the zig-zag curves above, freeze us on a set course. Above all, they create new vested interests. The more you induce Octopus Oil to invest in gasification or LNG at \$3.75, the harder it will be to unleash competition at \$2.25.

This is why anyone with the economist's view of the world prescribes price decontrol. This provides the incentive to find the cheapest form of energy, whether or not the White House finds it first. Decontrol might cost five or six cents a gallon on gasoline, which is anyway less than Mr. Carter's proposal. We think it would be free for the consumer (see Phelps and Smith in readings), though costly for some oil companies with a vested interest in the entitlement program.

Decontrol, accordingly, might or might not create "windfall" profits. The more we understand the "energy crisis," the less affection we ourselves have for oil companies. Still, we would prefer that any windfall go to them, where it would be put into investment, rather than to the government, where it would be put into consumption. But if someone wants a windfall profits tax, that is a small matter compared with the imperative of restoring markets for energy.

There is one way to cut through the intellectual and political morass that has been labeled the "energy crisis," and one way to ensure energy for 1995. This is to decontrol prices. By the way, there is also one way to keep the oil and other energy companies in check. This is to stop giving subsidies to those with the brightest lobbyists, and to stop legislating price controls where a comma here or there determines which company gains and which loses. Free the price, and let the companies fight it out not in Washington but in the marketplace.

North Carolina

The Charlotte Observer (April 22, 1977)

"Conservation: Carter Is Right To Stress It"

We haven't seen enough of the details of Jimmy Carter's energy proposals to assess them. Neither has Congress, and that's why a dozen committees will spend the next few months considering the proposals' effect on America's economy. We do believe, however, that Mr. Carter is on the right track in his strong emphasis on energy conservation.

Mr. Carter is not advocating a no-growth policy or a Stone-Age style of living. This country could not stand that. As our population increases, so does the need for jobs and goods. Reducing energy consumption by crippling industry would be disastrous.

But there is a lot of give in our consumption of energy—a lot more than some American business leaders and consumers seem to think. The idea that economic growth and increased energy consumption are inseparable is simply wrong. The fact is that energy in America has been so cheap that spending money on more efficient use of it wasn't necessary. Those days are gone.

One ignored option on a personal level illustrates our lack of concern about energy conservation. Consumers can now buy low-priced, inefficient air conditioners, or buy much more efficient models for perhaps \$50 more. In most areas, the more costly model would pay for itself in savings on electricity costs in two to three years. In its five-year, the higher-priced model would put another \$50 back in the buyer's pocket. Yet the lower purchase price attracts many consumers.

As energy costs increase, the value of efficiency will become even more obvious. Much of what we have seen of Mr. Carter's energy program seems designed to use tax incentives to make Americans energy-conscious. That's a legitimate undertaking.

American industry has increased its energy efficiency since the Arab oil embargo of 1973. But a lot of fat is left. West German industry, for instance, uses 38 per cent less energy per unit of industrial output than does American industry.

Some companies can save more than others, of course, but not just small scale savings are involved. American Telephone and Telegraph Co. executives believe AT&T can go through the decade following the Arab oil embargo with normal business growth and zero energy growth. Since 1973, AT&T has cut its total energy use by 8.7 per cent and its energy use per installed telephone by 20 per cent—almost completely without investment.

Conservation will not solve our future energy problems, of course. Development of new sources of energy, from the sun and wind as well as the ground, must continue. Work on nuclear fusion, which may prove a source of clean, limitless energy for the future, must go on. But we can give ourselves more time to develop those alternatives by making better use of the energy we have now.

North Dakota

The Bismarck Tribune (April 21, 1977)

"A Kick in the Energy Plexus"

Enough information about President Carter's energy plan has been leaked to let the country know that a good deal of it is going to be thoroughly disliked.

If his program is approved, we are going to be paying far more in the near future for gasoline than we are now. The same for natural gas and other forms of energy used to run the nation.

There is no question but what some blow to the belly is needed to wake Americans up to the fact that we do not have an unlimited supply of energy at cheap prices—at any price, for that matter.

We can run out of oil and natural gas, and what we are going to be able to get our hands on is going to cost us more and more. And part of the "more" is going to be due to the fact that government has delayed the face-off with reality far longer than it should have.

We must also reconcile ourselves to the fact that as usual the greatest sacrifice will be made by the vast multitude of low-income and fixed income people who can least afford it. Just because there are so many more of these than there are of the rich, these are the ones who must cut their consumption to make any cutback consequential. Those who can afford it will dismiss the high tax on an automobile, or on gaso-

line, with a flick of the finger. The rest of us will have to conserve because we'll have no choice: We'll be able to afford nothing else.

As President Carter is expected to say tonight, drastic action is needed, and needed now, if catastrophe is to be averted.

Ohio

Cincinnati Enquirer (April 22, 1977)

"The Carter Energy Plan"

Because our Nation's economy is so complex and so sensitive to its critical need for energy, government control of the cost and supply of that energy amounts to control of the economy itself. Yet the multifaceted plan President Carter presented Congress and the nation Wednesday night is deceiving.

Mr. Carter's predictions of energy depletion in this country and abroad are realistic enough.

The initial disappointment we find in the President's plan, however, is that whatever sacrifices the American people must ultimately make are the result of the very kinds of government control and regulatory activity Mr. Carter proposes we expand. And those sacrifices are demanded without clear assurance the sacrifices will result in a greater supply of energy.

Though the President described his program in only the most general terms, the details of his plan are for more government price-fixing of energy resources, more coercion of the private sector and greater inconvenience and expense for every American. This is a program that can only make matters worse and life even more unfair than it is.

There are two central failures in the President's plan. First, for all their promised sacrifices, the American people have little real assurance that government is using the money it extracts in special taxes for energy development. Surely the kinds of taxes the President envisions, together with a pledge to prevent energy companies from earning the profits they need to develop new energy sources, will limit the private sector's role. Higher taxes extracted for gasoline and larger automobiles and recreation vehicles will go for tax rebates and social services.

Where, then, is the link between the limits on world energy supplies and the sacrifices we are asked to make? If we are running out of energy, why will reducing our growth in energy demand to 20% instead of 4 percent make all that much difference unless the money we extract in taxes is recycled into energy development?

There is a second and critical failure in the President's plan. This nation is so dependent on its automobiles for transportation and recreation that taxing their use without providing a secondary form of mass transit is self-defeating.

The introduction of a new energy plan by a President whose party dominates the House and the Senate is a new element in American political life. In ordinary times that would be good. But this plan of conservation, limited production, coerced conversion, marginal development and the liberals' definition of fairness to everyone except those who are energy producers is an extraordinary approach.

Members of the Congress, both Democratic and Republican, have a responsibility to minimize the role the federal government will play

in this program. They have a duty to insure that if taxes on gasoline must be raised, those taxes are used not for rebates and social services but for the development of new energy sources and the research and development of vehicles that consume less energy.

It would be a mistake to punish ourselves because Congresses past failed us. Their determination that government control the supply, the demand and the cost of energy is a major factor in the crisis the President describes. Yet the greater mistake would be to continue to allow the federal government to dominate the economy through its control of energy.

Cleveland Plain Dealer (April 19, 1977)

"Carter Right on Energy"

President Carter laid it on the line when he outlined the energy crisis last night. In a preliminary warmup for his specific proposals tomorrow, the President warned all Americans that sacrifices are in store for everyone if we are to avert an energy disaster in five years.

The President's 10 points were well thought out and dwelt mainly on conservation. We support the general thrust of President Carter's willingness to face the problem and the political unpopularity it may entail.

The President's candor was refreshing. He covered the waterfront of government responsibility, economic growth, protection of the environment, the American vulnerability to foreign energy sources, prices, conservation and the development of new energy resources.

It was notable that he did not mention nuclear power. President Carter rightfully stated there would be sacrifices for all, including business and the consumer, but he said all must share in what has to be done.

This is the first of the major programs and challenges of the Carter administration. The President admitted that his program would not be "easy or popular."

We feel that President Carter is on the right track. We will look forward to his specific proposals tomorrow.

There may be some things that Congress will rightfully add or subtract from the Carter energy program. But the general thrust of President Carter's message to the American people is that something of a major nature must be done about the energy crisis and there is no time to lose.

We support President Carter's constructive efforts to alert this country to this world problem.

There may be some argument about remedies, but there can be no argument that the country faces a major energy crisis that will require drastic action.

Oklahoma

Tulsa Daily World (April 22, 1977)

"Call For Sacrifice"

One need not agree with every detail of President Carter's energy conservation program to say that it is a welcome first step toward meeting this generation's greatest national challenge.

But it is only a first step. And despite all of the President's pious rhetoric about "sacrifice," it is actually a very timid step. It deals seriously with only one aspect of the energy picture—demand. It almost completely ignores the concept of increasing supply.

The President's program implies great sacrifice, but when the specifics are sorted out, much of the sacrifice has been cancelled out by political sweeteners such as tax rebates and continuing artificial price controls that encourage consumption while discouraging production.

As Columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak explain on the opposite page, the President has opted for Government control as a means of cutting energy use. He has abandoned the idea of reducing consumption and increasing production via a free market place.

Perhaps it was politically impossible to do otherwise. It was obvious that the President's call for modest sacrifices in the form of gasoline and automobile taxes were not well received by the Congress. Nearly all of his applause, on the other hand, came when he promised some punitive measure against the oil companies.

If the idea persists that the energy shortage can be solved by taxing and regulating energy producers, then the battle is lost before it starts. But that seems to be the Carter approach.

What kind of "sacrifice" is it to tax oil and gas producers at the wellhead, then redistribute that tax revenue to consumers? How is that going to control inflation, encourage sacrifice or create new supplies of energy?

The President calls for a big increase in coal production, but without changing any of the Mickey Mouse environmental regulations which discourage coal production.

The plans to encourage home insulation, to subsidize high mileage cars and to require heat-savings technology in new buildings—all of these things will help. But they aren't going to solve the energy problem, and they represent no great sacrifice.

Even if we could cut petroleum consumption in half—an unlikely development—it would only stretch our present reserves out a few years. Instead of having a disastrous economic breakdown in 1985, it would be postponed until perhaps 1995.

President Carter has gone no more than halfway toward a realistic energy policy.

Oregon

Herald & News, Klamath Falls (April 18, 1977)

"Energy Crisis: Keep an Open Mind on Carter Proposals"

President Carter will outline his energy proposals Wednesday to Congress.

There have been a number of hints about what it will contain.

The Wall Street Journal reported the message will include:

—An increase in 1979 of five cents on the federal gas tax which could escalate to 50 cents in 10 years.

—A tax starting at \$412 per car for manufacturers whose automobiles use too much gas.

—An increase in natural gas taxes and on the industrial use of gas.

Those mean one thing to the consumer; higher costs in energy and the things that energy produces (which means just about everything).

Those kinds of propositions are tough to take. That doesn't mean, however, people shouldn't study them realistically and honestly.

A recent CIA report indicates the world gas and oil supply is much smaller than earlier supposed. Another report indicates that unless solutions to the energy crisis are found the United States could face upheaval and chaos by the year 2000.

We are living in a different world than we were 10 years ago. The Arab oil boycott gave us a taste of things which happen when oil is short. Unfortunately, we don't seem to learn very fast.

We're importing more oil now than we were at the time immediately prior to the boycott.

Oil isn't a renewable resource. Once it's gone, it's gone for good. Unless steps are taken now which reduce our dependence on oil, the economic and social dislocation which will come are truly staggering.

Rep. Al Ullman said in Klamath Falls last week that "We're in a crisis even though we can't see it."

Ullman's right. The crisis is here. What follows if we don't react and plan now is chaos.

One thing that should be borne in mind when looking at President Carter's proposals is that he has nothing to gain politically by these draconian measures. If he presents them to Congress, it's because he believes them necessary.

That doesn't make them above debate, discussion and analysis, but it does mean they should be received with an open mind and a realistic appraisal of what the future holds.

We have nothing to gain and much to lose by not dealing with the energy crisis while we still can.—PB

The Oregonian, Portland (April 22, 1977)

"Carter Sets Energy Thresholds"

President Carter has offered up a national energy policy that emphasizes conservation over expanding production, thereby drawing a dividing line that will test the tolerance levels of the Congress and virtually every special energy interest group in the nation.

The President has offered a courageous program that enhanced his own leadership image with the American people, who quite likely are willing to make more sacrifices than the President has asked. His is a program of gradualism, a tightening of tax and regulatory penalties in the years ahead, aimed at squeezing energy wastes out of the nation's economy and life-styles. It offers a visible carrot and a hidden stick.

Unlike the wartime demands made on the nation by other presidents, nothing will happen tomorrow. In fact, it may be well into next week before the Congress gets the actual Carter bills, delayed by complex drafting problems after having been promised prior to his address to a joint session of both houses Wednesday night. These bills, while shedding more light on Carter's proposals, will also place an emphasis on them that was not apparent in the text of his speech.

For example, the administration's press briefings on nuclear energy development indicate that the new legislation, proposing easier siting

decisions, more safety and a reduction in construction times, would greatly speed up the development of nuclear power beyond the levels now expected by the industry or indicated by Carter in his address.

The big question with Carter's proposals is not whether his goals are desirable, but whether the plans will achieve these goals by 1985, the year Carter proposed to get annual energy growth down to less than 2 percent and reduce gasoline consumption by 10 percent of current levels, while cutting in half the dangerous reliance of the nation on imported oil.

Powerful interests in Congress have already denounced Carter's plans for a standby gasoline tax that would increase in 5-cent increments up to 50 cents a gallon in 10 years if the nation failed to reduce gasoline consumption. Since only heavy, progressive taxes on big cars that use a lot of gas would work directly to reduce that consumption, it seems obvious that the tax would be triggered each year. By 1987, this would generate, federal officials say, about \$60 billion a year which would be returned to citizens, but not necessarily in the amounts they paid, because driving habits vary widely.

But even if the tax is enacted, there is no evidence that it would drastically change the driving habits of the most affluent nation in the world. In 10 years, Americans would hardly be paying what European drivers are now paying.

The administration ought to concentrate on the automobile itself. Placing a heavy graduated tax on what Carter called "gas guzzlers" would not just hit large luxury cars heavily, but would substantially increase the costs of most eight-cylinder family vehicles getting less than 22 miles to the gallon by 1984. Purchasers of small, fuel-efficient cars would get a rebate that would amount to as much as \$473 on a 1978 model getting 38 miles to the gallon.

But the joker in this plan is that in order for there to be any rebate funds available for the small cars, heavy taxes would have to be collected on the large vehicles. The IRS would adjust each year the rebate sums available.

The gasoline tax and the fuel penalty proposals present political and economic problems of great magnitude, but they may well look like pushovers compared to trying to nearly double coal production and forcing utilities to spend billions of dollars switching from oil and gas to coal, while at the same time satisfying environmental problems.

How Carter's goals are to be reached is where the battle will be waged in the months ahead. Carter is gambling on both the political and economic fronts. Even if he wins much of his program in Congress, his administration could well be struck down by an economic depression and more unacceptable inflation that would be placed at the door of his energy policies.

The President said in his speech that his plan "can lead to an even better life for the people of America," that it need not debase lifestyles and living standards. Given the fact that there really isn't any alternative to planning to cope with future energy shortages, the nation has to believe that Carter's goals can be met even if disagreeing on the routes he has proposed.

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia Bulletin (April 20, 1977)

"On Energy, Mr. Carter Appeals to the People"

On Monday evening President Carter came directly to us with his appeal for support of an energy program that will call upon all of us—as individuals, families, communities, regions, unions, industries—to discipline ourselves and bear our share of necessary sacrifices for our common good, perhaps even our survival.

This evening, the President will go before Congress—and, again, before the people—with the specifics of his proposals. He will put flesh on the bones of his plan to meet seven specific goals by 1985. Simply to list those goals evokes the kind of national effort that will be required. He asks the country to cut the annual growth in energy demand, to cut gasoline consumption below the current level, to cut oil imports, to set up a strategic oil reserve, to greatly increase coal production, to undertake a vast program of home insulation, and to step up solar heating.

And the President lists a number of principles governing his energy plan, some of which will add immensely to the difficulty and complexity of achieving his goals. For example, one of the principles is that prices should generally reflect the true replacement costs of energy. That conjures up the prospect of our people paying more or doing without energy in any form, the need to prevent this from bearing with undue harshness on those least able to afford it, and the hazard of more inflation to be contained. He calls for safe-guarding the environment while shifting to greater use of our more plentiful coal resources and applying stricter standards to nuclear energy. And he asserts—as a principle—that “we must be fair” in calling for equal sacrifice from every region, class of people and interest group.

Mr. Carter has gone to us, the people, because he recognizes that we must be convinced of the need to make the sacrifices he wants of us. And only if we are so convinced will Congress be able to respond to the broad personal interest instead of each important, special interest.

The specific programs and measures that Mr. Carter will propose this evening will have to undergo the test of public debate. But we think that he is absolutely right in going to the people directly in a sustained fashion for the support that earlier Presidents have not been able to arouse on the crucial subject of energy, and in making conservation the cornerstone of his policy.

Hopefully, we as individuals will respond by ending the extravagance in use of energy that makes us, as Mr. Carter said, the most wasteful nation on earth. It would also mean that as unions, managements, and local governments we would find ways to avoid such irrational actions as prolonged mass transit strikes at the very time when the nation is being challenged to shape up on energy or face a possible national catastrophe whose effects will be visited on our children and grandchildren.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (April 21, 1977)

"Mr. Carter's energy plan: A modestly grand design"

A senior Carter Administration official, at the end of an hour and a half elaborating on the President's comprehensive energy proposal yesterday afternoon, observed with only the faintest glimmer of a smile that "It has sometimes been said that men and nations will never do the rational thing until they have exhausted the alternatives."

To that he added that "the U.S. at this time may very well have reached that point."

The subject was energy. As Mr. Carter told the Congress last night, that represents "the greatest domestic challenge our nation will face in our lifetime."

The enormous stress which Mr. Carter has put on the necessity to turn from profligate use of fuels and to restructure America's pattern of deepening dependence on known energy sources, is not overstated. One can argue about the imminence of almost unthinkable economic and social disaster, but in terms of months, brief years at most.

Many also will argue, however, about how squarely Mr. Carter's proposals meet that profoundly necessary call for the country finally after long negligence to "do the rational thing."

The proposal put forth by Mr. Carter last night is immensely complicated. Even the details released by the White House to background Mr. Carter's address leave a vast number of intricate questions—and not a few major ones—still to be answered. Monday, a more detailed document is scheduled to be transmitted to Capitol Hill.

The pressure to give America a rational energy policy has been many years a building. Before Mr. Carter's courageous commitment to draft and implement a broad policy, the growing crisis had precipitated fluent lip service and little constructive leadership.

Mr. Carter deserves full marks for intent. He deserves the most serious attention of Americans of both parties. He deserves, and the most pressing interests of the nation's welfare demand he receive, support in leading America out of its suicidally promiscuous fuel guzzling.

For all that he deserves, what Mr. Carter is going to get is largely in the hands of a Congress which is more accustomed to piecemeal and compromising legislation than to grand design. By going directly to the American public in a dramatic sequence of broadcast appeals, Mr. Carter is seeking to make it easier for the Congress to join in a grand design.

The proportions of that grand design, as it was partially unveiled last night, appear, if anything, less monumental than advanced billing suggested. That may ultimately redound to Mr. Carter's advantage. His prescription would appear, for most Americans, to be less nasty medicine than indicated by its earlier labels: "The moral equivalent of war" among them.

If implemented by the Congress, the plan gradually would make it very expensive to own or use the big fuel-wasteful, automobiles which have so long so fascinated Americans. It would make wasteful petro-

leum and gas consumption more expensive, while seeking to stabilize the market and supply process and to yield economic equity by a system of tax compensations. It would develop a national economy increasingly fueled by inexhaustible energy sources such as sunlight and by relatively inexhaustible coal.

In seeking to balance those intents, Mr. Carter has outlined a program which is designed to readjust the habits and the economic plans of a great number of Americans and American institutions—without asking for fundamental structural change. It is a deeply conservative proposal, in terms of America's economic and social conventions.

Mr. Carter insisted last night that "none of our people must make an unfair sacrifice. None should reap an unfair advantage." His proposal went to exquisite lengths to meet those standards of fairness. Nonetheless, from special interests and from ideologues, the proposal will precipitate tumultuous debate—which already had begun.

As that debate rages, and the specific legislative challenges unfold, the strong presumption of favor must go to Mr. Carter. The alternative is to compound one more irrational response to the inescapable crisis of energy which America must face.

The Pittsburgh Press (April 26, 1977)

"Selling America Short"

Perhaps the most cogent criticism of President Carter's energy policy comes from Dr. Robert C. Seamans, Jr., the noted engineer and administrator who is leaving the federal government after decades of valuable service.

Mr. Seamans, who is accepting a professorship at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), has impressive credentials to analyze and fault large-scale government programs.

Among other things, he has been head of the Energy Research and Development Administration, deputy boss of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, secretary of the Air Force, and president of the National Academy of Engineering.

Mr. Seamans' main quarrel with the Carter program, which many other experts share, is that it puts great emphasis on conservation and not enough on developing new fuel sources which the nation will need toward the end of this century.

Mr. Seamans is by no means an unmitigated critic. He praises, for example, White House proposals to tax gas-guzzling cars, to insulate homes and buildings, to make more use of coal and to promote solar energy.

He is, however, disturbed by the administration's lack of faith in the ability of American technology to develop new fuel and power sources to meet the country's long-range energy needs.

This lack of confidence manifests itself in the low priority Mr. Carter is giving to nuclear power, to synthetic fuels, to shale oil, to new supplies of natural gas and to fusion.

Mr. Seamans believes that if the nation made an all-out effort—as it did in the World War II atom-bomb project and in carrying out President Kennedy's pledge to put a man on the moon—power would be coming out of our ears in 20 years. And history is on his side.

Why, then, has President Carter, himself a nuclear engineer, set his sights so low? Why in his eyes has a formerly can-do country become a can't-do one?

It's difficult to answer with certainty, but the suspicion is that he has been co-opted by advisers who are environmental extremists, by believers in no growth or in as little as possible, and by small-is-beautiful zealots who want to return to a life of pastoral simplicity.

America can supply itself with the power needed for jobs and growth.

But first it will have to send out to pasture the apostles of pessimism who surround Mr. Carter.

There they could commune with the furbish lousewort and the snail darter—and not throttle the nation's drive for energy sufficiency.

Rhode Island

The Providence Journal (April 24, 1977)

"The Standby Gasoline Tax—Carter's Fallback Weapon"

It was no accident that President Carter preceded his presentation to Congress of the standby gasoline tax with an exposition of his proposal to tax big, gas-guzzling cars and to give sizable rebates to buyers of more fuel-efficient automobiles. The big gun in Mr. Carter's arsenal clearly is his attempt to improve the overall gas-mileage ratio of the country's total automobile fleet between 1978 and 1985.

Only as a fallback weapon does the standby gasoline tax come into the picture. Mr. Carter's proposed gasoline tax would not even begin to take effect until 1979. And after that, it would only be imposed if Americans fail to meet the target set for that year, in such an event, a surtax of five cents would be put on each gallon of gasoline for each one percent that consumption exceeded the target quota. The same penalty would be applied each year with a limit of 50 cents.

The key statement in President Carter's speech, relative to the gas tax, was this: "If the American people respond to our challenge, we can meet these targets, and this gasoline tax will never be imposed."

Americans who may have feared that Mr. Carter was bent on hauling them out from behind the wheels of their automobiles can now breathe more easily. Mr. Carter isn't about to play homewrecker in the great American love affair with the automobile, but he would like to cool its ardor a bit. As a resident of the rural South, he has a first-hand awareness that the automobile, as much as it may be a toy for some, is the only workable means of personal transportation for a huge number of Americans.

By spreading out the time-frame for both his proposed gas-guzzler excise tax and his delayed gasoline surtax, he has also taken into account the impossibility of quickly shifting gears in the huge American economic engine, of which the automobile has been the flywheel for decades.

Should the time come when Mr. Carter's standby gasoline tax is ever imposed, however, there are legitimate doubts about its effectiveness as presently conceived. The plan to rebate the proceeds from such a tax "progressively through the federal income tax system and by direct

payment to people who do not pay taxes" raises substantial questions. Would such a rebate be a deterrent to gas-wasters who know they will get a rebate on their income tax? And is this not in effect, if not in intent, another approach toward the redistribution of wealth?

A fairer and more efficient way to limit gasoline sales might be the ration stamp plan proposed a couple of years back by energy economist David Freeman, which would allow every automobile owner so many gallons of gas at the current price, with a heavy additional tax on all gas purchased without stamps. But the revenues derived from any such gas-conservation effort would be better directed toward research and development of alternate fuels, new conservation technologies, or mass transportation systems, than diverted into an income redistribution program which is unrelated to energy policy.

Congress has a couple of years in which to thrash out these objections before the standby taxing authority would go into effect. Meanwhile, it should move quickly to enact the principal conservation tool sought by Mr. Carter, which is the excise tax on gas-hungry automobiles and the rebate incentive to "buy down" to models that give better than standard mileage per gallon.

South Carolina

The News and Courier, Charleston (April 20, 1977)

"Carter's View Of Energy Future"

The risks attending bearers of unpleasant news apply as much to presidents as to, say, newspaper editors. When he talks of losing popularity because he predicts an energy future laced with shortages and self-discipline, President Carter recalls with justifiable cynicism what happens to messengers of bad tidings.

Wasting time trying to cut off Mr. Carter's political head will serve no useful purpose. As the President says, there can be no doubt that the country is running out of conventional sources of energy. The only arguable issue is how soon and how to postpone it.

The answer to the question is not in the hands of the White House or Congress or anybody else big on the governmental scene. It depends entirely upon consumers themselves. If they choose to curtail their use of oil, electricity and natural gas, if they will make the necessary effort to develop acceptable substitutes and if they will at the same time avoid stumbling up dangerous, blind alleys, then their energy future is bright, rather than gloomy. It is a matter, as Mr. Carter remarked Monday night, of national faith. That means faith in ability to achieve the necessary goals, coupled with faith that those who have studied the energy future and are making predictions know what they are talking about.

Of the two commitments, the second may be harder to come by than the first. Mr. Carter admitted as much himself on Monday night. He referred to doubts about whether the companies which produce most of the statistical matter on which estimates of supplies are founded are presenting a correct picture.

It is in getting at the truth concerning supplies and demand that Mr. Carter can perform his most useful service at this point. It is

tempting to believe that affairs can progress still further, into the realm of a viable, nationally-accepted energy policy. We doubt if that actually is in the cards right now. Regardless of how many good ideas Mr. Carter may have about saving energy, his progress in implementing them is far from assured. Congress is not ready to furnish the help the President needs. It is not even ready to admit the accuracy of his crystal ball. Even if it sees the truth, it will be sorely tempted to disagree for political reasons.

Finally it must be said that the ideas thus far advanced by the President are not all that promising. His steps toward an effective agency are in the right direction. If Mr. Carter can shape his new agency to centralize and streamline, eliminating the wasteful duplications and overlaps which tend to frustrate the search for new sources, he will have accomplished a great deal. On the other hand, his plan for controlling energy by penalizing consumers through high taxes is open to serious doubts. Indications are that gasoline taxes, for example, will have to reach a politically impossible level before they have any major effect on consumption. It is not wise to criticize Mr. Carter for considering the possibilities of such an approach, but it is also unwise to put too much faith in it.

Mr. Carter's speech Monday was a speech that some president had to make sometime. To the extent that they serve to awaken a public which up to now has kept its eyes resolutely closed to dangerous possibilities of the future, his words command attention. It has to be noted, however, that while calling for national determination to lick the energy problem, Mr. Carter presented no immediate solutions. Maybe that will come later. Whether it does depends on how seriously fellow Americans take Mr. Carter's message. More seriously, we hope, than they have taken other messages on the same subject.

South Dakota

Daily Capital Journal, Pierre (April 21, 1977)

"The Impossible Dream"

President Carter submitted his proposals for reducing consumption of energy to the congress and to the nation Wednesday night. Essentially they contemplate penalizing production and use of automobiles with large engines consuming a lot of gasoline for each 100 miles traveled. They also contemplate rewarding people who insulate and weatherproof their homes in an effort to reduce consumption in heating their homes.

There are numerous other features of the proposal, but essentially it boils down to penalizing consumption and rewarding conservation of energy through exercise of the federal power of taxation.

Unquestionably there is a tremendous waste of energy in this country. It is apparent every time anybody walks out of a room and leaves the electric light burning in the empty room, or for that matter the empty house. It also is apparent every time a truck driver drives into a truck stop for a lunch break and leaves his diesel engine running while he eats his meal. It occurs everytime an automobile is driven at a speed exceeding the most efficient operating rating of the engine. It occurs in thousands of other actions taken by millions of people.

But we certainly doubt that an attempt to sell the people of this country on the idea that they should not waste energy in the manner to which they are accustomed will be any more successful than attempts to stop people from drinking alcoholic beverages or smoking tobacco. There are people who save money and people who save energy, just as there are people who neither drink alcoholic beverages nor smoke cigarettes. But there also are millions of people who spend money about as fast as they receive it and who spend energy without regard to its cost.

We have no doubt that energy is going to cost more in the future than it has in the past, when measured in terms of American money. But we also have no doubt that people are going to continue to use and waste energy no matter what the cost may be. The public response to an increase in the cost of living in terms of American money in the past has been a demand for more money. We think that will continue to be the public response to an increase in the cost of energy. To us the idea that the American people can be concerted into a nation of savers is an impossible dream.

Tennessee

The Commercial Appeal, Memphis (April 22, 1977)

"A Thankless Job"

Jimmy Carter was right when he said of the speech he was about to deliver to Congress Wednesday night: "I don't expect much applause."

The President was right when he said that the attempt to launch a comprehensive national energy policy is "a thankless job."

Most tough jobs are thankless. And Carter undoubtedly has been reminded frequently of late that politics is the art of compromise. In other words, he isn't going to get everything he asked of Congress in an energy package.

But whatever faults and weaknesses his proposed overall policy may have, Carter deserves much credit for getting the attention of Congress and the American people.

For the first time in years of talk about the dire consequences of doing little or nothing to slow the consumption of finite fossil fuels and to develop alternatives for the future, people are beginning to accept the hard fact that a crisis is at hand, and that coping with it requires sacrifices.

Give Carter a good mark for communicating to the public both the scope of the problem and the need to act now.

Never mind the gratitude. Save it until we see how much Congress does to implement Carter's policy, how much the energy industries, the manufacturers, the transport and transit companies and our wasteful populace do to reduce the energy drain, to convert to different kinds of fuels, and to preserve clean air and protect the landscape while doing so.

Now, having agreed with Carter that he is into a thankless job and having credited him with trying to do it anyway, what of the comprehensive policy he proposed to Congress?

If anything, it does not go far enough.

The penalties the President proposes for inhibiting the use of gasoline—a sliding increase in a per-gallon tax and a levy on Detroit's gas-

guzzling luxury cars—are as may be. It's hard to believe that the extra cost will keep those who load cars with air-conditioners, stereo FM radio, power steering and power windows, plush carpeting and fancy trim from wanting heavy engines and taking useless trips as long as big autos are legal and fuel consumption is unlimited.

Yet Carter says conservation of gasoline is the heart of his program.

The incentives for improving home and building insulation may change the codes for future construction. But it's doubtful the tax benefits will make a dramatic difference in older housing, office buildings and factories.

Carter's policy recognizes the need to let domestic prices on oil from newly opened wells rise to the world market price as an incentive to more exploration and drilling. But he has short-circuited the other incentives such as directing that excess profits be plowed back into increased production and exploration and easing the limits on drilling on the continental shelf. Deregulation is still the key to avoiding natural gas shortages in a bitter cold winter and utter crisis should foreign oil imports be embargoed again, as they were in 1973. Artificially low prices are still part of the Carter package, and the proposal to pass "windfall profits" back to consumers rather than direct them into greater production leaves the energy companies with an excuse for dawdling.

Such examples could be expanded. But so could a list of good points—such as separate electric meters in multi-unit apartment buildings, incentives for off-peak use of electricity, greater efficiency in appliances, "cogeneration" to capture lost steam in the production of electricity, the pressure on large industrial users of natural gas and oil to convert to coal and the quicker licensing of nuclear power plants.

That is what Carter has done so carefully. He has balanced the sacrifices with benefits. He has softened criticism by including ideas that critics can agree with.

Of special importance, Carter has promised an independent and more accurate source of information about energy supplies than that of the companies which control and sell energy.

If it seems strange to arouse the nation against its own high rate of growth, its hunger to consume, its exuberant spirit of materialism, just remember last winter. Remember the long gasoline station lines of the winter of 1973-74.

Carter has sought a plan that makes changes gradually and fairly, if it is taken seriously and if the balances are maintained as it moves through Congress.

Nobody including the President expects the energy bill to emerge intact and unchanged. Yes, there will be still more compromises than Carter already has made.

But it is a thought-out, conscientious and total effort to prevent a national catastrophe.

The Knoxville Journal (April 23, 1977)

"'Last Resort' Only Choice?"

President Carter's long-anticipated energy program did what most informed sources predicted it would do. It charted an austere course of seemingly impossible energy conservation instead of promoting

adequate expansion of electrical power generating capacity. In doing so, Carter launched a process which may prove to be a major turning point in American history.

A key to the administration's thinking clearly rests with its attitudes toward nuclear power. Now, there's little doubt that the nation has no choice in regard to conservation of petroleum. Like it or not, no insightful energy program could deny the need to use less gasoline and oil. But there was—and still is—a clear alternative to Carter's extreme conservation measures aimed at American homes and industries.

We can have more electrical power, much more. The source? What Carter calls a "last resort"—nuclear powered generating plants. Take TVA's Browns Ferry nuclear installation. In normal circumstances, this one generating plant produces about 15 per cent of the total power generated by the whole TVA system—including the dozen conventional steam plants and 49 dams which generate electricity. (Browns Ferry, unlike other generating plants, usually is operated at near peak capacity because it's relatively cheaper.)

This isn't theory. It's fact. But for whatever the deep, dark reason for the administration's selection of extreme conservation as the alternative to adequate expansion of generating facilities, the prospects are woefully bleak and alarmingly costly.

Even if all the grand design works—works to the extent that conservation goals are met—there will remain the threat that the national economic balance will be so upset that ruinous inflation and unemployment will result.

Carter's "last resort" of nuclear power expansion might well be the only choice to keep America from slipping into the dark ages of perpetual economic and social depression.

Texas

Abilene Reporter-News (April 22, 1977)

"The President Was Right; They Didn't Like Plan"

America sat and listened and watched. The next morning the nation read again what it had witnessed. The citizens mulled it over. By mid-morning of E-Day Plus One confusion was widespread and irritation was growing. By noon, irritation and confusion were tied. By nightfall, irritation and a newcomer, apprehension, were outdistancing confusion. And the spirit of one-ness which had existed during the anticipatory period between Monday's warning and Wednesday's plan had fragmented again into special interest groups.

The oilmen around here were less outspoken than some elsewhere. They tended to wait and see. Our Congressmen were irate.

Most non-oil people just plain didn't understand all that about well-heads and crude oil taxes, but the message got through about gasoline taxes, new car taxes, tax credits on making their homes more energy-efficient.

The over-heard small talk by people who don't own industrial plants and oil wells mostly was unhappy talk—particularly about people who can afford gas guzzler new cars being wealthy enough to absorb penalty taxes while the greater amounts of gas they'll use will boost total gasoline consumption to a point where other people have to pay extra gasoline taxes.

The President had been right. They didn't like his plan. But most realize they would not have liked any plan drastic enough to change our national mode.

And hardly anybody seemed to be denying the need for drastic steps. The general reaction was not one of panic, just concern.

Americans are an optimistic people. Some, of course, always see doom just ahead, but the majority believe "everything will work out."

We agree with them. Nobody ever said life would be easy forever.

The President has the popular support of the people, despite those "experts" who say he is a babe in the Washington woods, that he just doesn't understand how things are done in the big city, etc.

As long as his support continues anywhere nearly as high as it has been up to now, the professional Washingtonians may have to learn new ways. The folks back home have endured a lot of selfish national governmental actions in recent years. If anybody "doesn't understand" how things are now, it may be the professionals. The people want a concerned and conscientious government.

There will be give and take in the months ahead while the Energy Plan is shaped into federal law. There will be changes in it, hopefully improvements. But first reaction is encouraging. The nation is generally ready for change.

At least, this is a starting point.

The Austin American-Statesman (April 20, 1977)

"Energy Plan: Cold Turkey"

President Carter forewarned the nation Monday night that his proposals on energy will not be easy to swallow.

Tonight at 8 o'clock he will present his energy program to a joint session of the Congress.

Reaction has begun well before the fact. That's hardly surprising, as part of the Carter plan was to give out parts of it well in advance, probably both to sample the initial reaction and to soften the blow of what will be a message of austerity and, if not dark despair, a mood of gloom.

What the American people must guard against is a knee-jerk reaction to the message Carter is trying to get across: The day of cheap, abundant fossil fuel is at an end; the crisis is real, and upon us.

Whatever will be said of the specifics of the Carter energy plan, that message must not be lost.

The President cannot dictate an energy plan. The Congress will have much to say. Indeed, the Congress may fail to act out of fear of loss of public approbation, something which cannot be said of the President.

America is an energy junkie, and Carter's cold turkey withdrawal plan may be the only thing that will work. It deserves our serious attention.

The Dallas Morning News (April 22, 1977)

"A Start, At Least"

President Carter's energy plan, placed before Congress Wednesday night, included good news and bad news. The good news was that at last a thoroughly thought-out plan to solve the energy problem has been offered in Washington.

The bad news was that most of the thinking done was of the sort that caused the energy problem in the first place.

It took courage for President Carter to get down to cases on the sacrifices that Americans will be facing in the next few years on the energy front. It is easy to call for sacrifice in general terms. Every politician does it. But urging the people to bear the specific pains of dollars-and-cents punitive taxes requires political bravery.

The chief flaw in his plan, as we see it, is that it follows in the failure-strewn path of so many other federal energy schemes of the past two decades. Like the 1954 natural gas decision by the Supreme Court, the President's plan is based on too much federal control over the marketing of energy and too little incentive for the production of energy.

For nearly a century under the free market system, the petroleum industry developed the greatest exploration and production effort in the world. By contrast, during the past two decades of growing federal interference, the production side of the industry has been dismantling itself.

The industry and the producing states have been promised an end to this destructive interference. Candidate Jimmy Carter made definite promises last fall that he would work for deregulation of prices of new natural gas in order to increase incentive.

If this plan is voted into law, President Jimmy Carter will have broken those promises. Government red tape and bureaucracy in the energy business will be multiplied, not reduced. Price-fixing will be broadened, not ended.

Whatever happens, the consumer will inevitably have to pay more for the energy he uses in the years to come.

If the federal government would let the economy follow the free enterprise route the extra money would go to reward those successful in producing new supplies of energy. Thus the energy problem would be eased from two directions, by the reduction in demand and by the increase in supply.

But in Carter's plan the extra money will go not to the energy producer, who badly needs encouragement, but to the tax man.

With market incentive for the producer, the consumer gives up something—higher energy bills—but he gets something in return—adequate supplies of energy. By Carter's plan, the consumer will pay more for energy plus tax, but the supplies will continue to dwindle away.

We applaud the President for making a start on the energy dilemma. But we would be far more enthusiastic had he not started in the wrong direction.

Houston Chronicle (April 22, 1977)

"Committing Economic and Social Folly"

The President's energy program is in our opinion wrong in its basic philosophy, potentially disastrous in economic impact and unworkable as a practical matter.

The most tragic thing about it is the sick smell of defeatism that permeates the whole approach.

The American people deserve better than to be told they must suffer with no end in sight because a few people in this administration have timidly decided the problem cannot be solved, that misery can only be rationed by an all-wise government.

That is the no-win philosophy of an energy plan that totally emphasizes conservation and pays only lip service to increasing the supply.

The failure of faith in the country's ability is the sad part. The most disturbing part of the approach is the assumption that the federal bureaucracy must take over detailed management of the country's energy life—which means its economic and social life. The government is in no way wise enough to do this.

The administration is attempting an enormous, almost unprecedented federal power grab and is attempting to stampede the country and the Congress into acquiescence.

The economics of the Carter plan are dead wrong. An energy-restricted economy is an economy which cannot furnish the jobs for its people. That is the bottom line of a policy which emphasizes conservation rather than production of a sufficiency of supply. It is all well and good to preach about "waste." There is certainly some of that. But all too often in that elitist philosophy about waste what is being ignored is that one man's waste is another man's job.

To restrict the economy and then artificially inflate prices on top of that with taxes is outrageous. Recycling the people's money through Washington and back to them is something that never quite works out the way it is soothingly promoted.

The single most damning indictment of the administration's thinking is that it embraces a demonstrated failure while trying to kill a demonstrated success.

Two decades of federal interstate regulation have turned the East, Midwest and parts of the South into natural gas disaster areas. In the intrastate market free of regulation there is sufficient gas. Yet the President proposes to kill the free market and extend the disaster. This cannot be rationalized, but unfortunately symbolizes the administration's energy proposals.

We have no quarrel with energy conservation, have supported it and will continue to support any reasonable efforts. But to rely on conservation without an equal, even greater, all-out effort to increase supplies is committing economic and social folly.

We noted the other day where it was said "the President feels it is ridiculous to burn precious fuels so we can be nice and hot in the winter and nice and cold in the summer."

Well, we feel it is ridiculous for the President to ask the people to go cold in the winter and hot in the summer, have fewer jobs and a stagnating, no-growth type economy, pay artificially higher taxes and prices and be smothered in federal controls—to put up with all this when he isn't moving heaven and Earth, and anything else in the way, to produce the energy that would make it unnecessary.

Utah

Deseret News, Salt Lake City (April 22, 1977)

"The Carter Energy Plan—Complex But Needed Start"

Maybe the White House ought to hope for another Arab oil embargo.

An absurd, outrageous idea? Of course—and a facetious one. But at least another embargo could demonstrate the reality of the energy crisis and inspire a willingness to sacrifice in a way that words from the Oval Office can never accomplish.

Then, too, an embargo and its aftermath would certainly be much simpler and easier to understand than the complicated package that President Carter presented to Congress and the nation Wednesday to implement his proposed new national energy policy.

Though much complexity is unavoidable in any such policy if it is to be truly comprehensive and effective, this one rivals a Rube Goldberg invention with its convoluted network of taxes, refunds, incentives, and controls.

Wherever there has been a choice between letting the free market function or getting the federal bureaucracy into the act, President Carter has usually opted for more government and the increased red tape and higher administrative costs this approach necessarily entails.

As might be expected in such a complex matter, the program has serious shortcomings. For example:

Though there are great differences between various parts of the country in terms of commuting distances and the development of mass transit, the proposed policy doesn't take these differences into account.

In fact, except for a marginally effective proposal to remove a 10 percent tax on intercity bus passengers, the Carter plan ignores mass transit development even though getting commuters out of cars and into buses can save enormous amounts of fuel.

The plan also leaves the impression that the Carter administration must never have heard of oil shale even though the deposits in Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado could make the U.S. entirely independent of foreign petroleum exporters. As taxes and other economic pressures push up the price of petroleum, shale ought to become more attractive economically.

Moreover, by proposing to retain federal controls on natural gas prices, the Carter plan would perpetuate a policy blunder that has for decades discouraged exploration for new supplies by keeping prices artificially low.

But don't get the wrong impression. The Carter plan is anything but a series of wrong choices. There's plenty that's right with it, both in detail and in principle, and with the kind of leadership it reflects.

It takes an uncommon type of politician to be as willing to spend his popularity to get a workable energy policy hammered out as Mr. Carter is. Now Congress needs to put the long-range interest of the country ahead of any other consideration, including the re-election or defeat of some of its members.

The basic principle reflected by the plan—that of rewarding those who conserve and penalizing those who waste energy—is eminently sound and sensible, as the carrot-and-stick approach has always been.

So is the effort to get Americans out of big gas-guzzlers and into small cars that are stingy on fuel, even if it takes a stiff tax to accomplish this.

Incentives for better insulation, less red tape so nuclear power can be expedited, inducements to develop solar energy and this nation's rich coal deposits—on these and many other points President Carter scored strongly, too.

Despite widespread criticism that the Carter plan has emphasized conservation at the expense of developing new energy sources, this constitutes an accurate description but an unwarranted complaint.

Conservation is essential if for no other reason than the fact that new energy supplies are going to be extremely expensive. Moreover, as *Business Week* magazine recently reported, there is a growing body of evidence that the way the U.S. uses energy can be made at least four times more efficient than it now is. If the U.S. is serious about solving its energy problems, slowing the rate of growth in the demand for fuel is absolutely essential.

The Carter energy program is no all-or-nothing package, and there is considerable room for changes. But even its least desirable and effective parts should prod Congress into thinking through this nation's energy priorities—something that should have been done four years ago during the Arab oil embargo.

Vermont

The Burlington Free Press (April 22, 1977)

"Facing the Facts About Energy"

President Carter has now matched his words on the energy crisis with action and it will be the unenviable task of Congress to decide the course the nation will take in the years ahead.

Although he has the full support of House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., the President knows he faces the first major test of his young administration, and he has chosen to do battle over what he called "the greatest challenge the nation will face in our lifetimes," short of war.

Some of the programs Carter wants enacted put him on a collision course with vested interests, either regionally or, as in the case of the standby gasoline tax, in states all around the nation where reliance on the car is a way of life.

Congressmen and senators from the major oil and natural gas-producing regions have already served notice they will protect the corporations against legislation that would affect their profits and their existence as the switch to coal, nuclear, solar and other forms of energy production begins.

It appears highly doubtful that the President's proposal for a tax on gasoline will be enacted. O'Neill believes Americans will not support it, and those representatives and senators from states where large auto manufacturing plants are located can be expected to oppose a high excise tax on gas-guzzling cars.

The President's energy program will force decisions on all of us that we would rather not face. Whether those who represent us in the nation's capitol will reject political opportunism in favor of the national interest is yet to be seen.

If the people of this country are really convinced that we can now set a course of prudently safeguarding our national resources for the enjoyment of future generations, then the bulk of Carter's energy program will succeed. He has told us it must succeed. "It is a thankless job," he told Congress, "but it is our job." It is the job of all of us.

Virginia

*Richmond Times-Dispatch (April 22, 1977)**"Carter's 'Solutions' "*

It is no wonder that overwhelming doubt seems to be the nation's prevailing reaction to President Carter's energy program. The efficacy and logic of many of his proposals are highly debatable, and some are frightening. That the President's suggested "solutions" might be worse than the problem itself is entirely possible.

By far the most disturbing general characteristic of the Carter plan is the emphasis that it would place upon federal control of energy matters. Coercion and regulation would serve as supporting pillars of the program, which would thrust the federal government deeper into the nation's economic affairs and into the private lives of its citizens than most people probably realize at this point. Given the exasperating and costly problems that have resulted from other efforts of the federal government to manage and manipulate private businesses and private lives, this is an alarming thought.

And such extreme governmental interference in the energy field should not be necessary. President Carter could have developed a program that placed greater reliance upon the free market, and it is a pity that he did not. Political pressures obviously prevailed over economic realities.

Removal of federal controls to permit oil and gas prices to rise to and remain at natural market levels would encourage companies to increase their exploration and production efforts and might eventually encourage consumers to conserve. Mr. Carter's plan would tighten the government's grip on the oil and gas industries—by extending federal price controls to intrastate gas, for example—and would use taxes and other governmental weapons to force people to consume less energy. The President's failure to stress the importance of increased domestic production of gas and oil is one of the most disappointing flaws in his program.

One of the President's major conservation weapons would be his proposal to force many American industries to convert from oil and gas to coal, a measure that would require a 66 percent increase in coal production by 1985. This is a laudable objective, for the nation has an abundance of coal that should be used to ease the pressure on scarcer fuels. But questions arise: How can the President reconcile his desire to increase coal production with his support of strip-mining legislation that would inhibit coal production? And where, we wonder, will the nation's utility companies get the \$50 billion they would need to convert their plants to coal?

Another weapon in Mr. Carter's arsenal is a conditional increase in the gasoline tax, which would rise in steps of 5 cents a year to a total of 50 cents a gallon as gasoline consumption rose. Supposedly this would significantly discourage gasoline usage, but the President should know better. If a 100 per cent increase in the cost of gasoline over a four year period has not induced motorists to conserve, and it hasn't, an increase of a nickel-per-gallon a year certainly would not. This tax would simply add to consumer costs and to inflationary pressures without contributing to an improvement in the energy situ-

ation. As a weapon, the tax would be a marshmallow; and Congress should not hesitate to reject it.

Mr. Carter's program is far too complex to discuss in detail intelligently at this time. It will be weeks, if not months, before the strengths and weaknesses of the plan come sharply into focus and its potential impact upon the economy, upon the lives of the American people and upon the energy crisis itself can be realistically assessed. But our preliminary examination of the plan has left us extremely disheartened.

Washington

The Seattle Times (April 20, 1977)

"Strong But Measured Energy Steps Needed"

President Carter's admonition to the nation that with the exception of preventing war, the energy crisis "is the greatest challenge our country will face during our lifetimes," is beyond question.

The easy parts of that challenge, as far as the President is concerned, are behind him. Mr. Carter and his aides have drafted an energy program that demands some sacrifice and some consequent political risk. And he has orchestrated a public-relations campaign to sell that program to the American people.

Now comes the hard part—the months-long effort to push the program through Congress in recognizable form.

Congress will—and probably should—make some changes in the Carter formula.

The nub of the problem is that some of the most important steps toward achieving desired energy goals are either inflationary or deflationary or both. Some of them also carry high environmental price tags.

Budget Director Bert Lance, who has emerged in the early weeks of the administration as one of the most level-headed of the President's advisers, notes that energy conservation, while essential, is "a double-edged sword" which could create new problems while it solves old ones.

Thus Congress and the administration are confronted with the need to conduct a balancing act. The medicine to be administered to America's energy-ravenous economy must be strong—but applied in careful doses.

Mr. Carter has done well not to procrastinate. The time to apply the medicine is well in advance of the next national elections.

President Ford also tried to get Congress to adopt a tough energy program. But a Democratic-controlled Congress—facing elections, a Republican President, and an apathetic public—sat on its hands.

The cost of that inaction has kept rising; of course. This country is now importing 42 per cent of its oil needs, as compared with 36 per cent before the 1973 Arab embargo.

The foreign-oil bill will go up \$6 billion this year, to more than \$40 billion.

The President's energy goals for 1985 are relatively moderate in view of the magnitude of the problem. They are achievable.

We have no doubt that the American public will meet those goals if the crisis is accepted as real and the sacrifices demanded are perceived as fair.

Those are big "Ifs." It remains for Mr. Carter and Congress to take the "Ifs" out of the equation.

West Virginia

The Charleston Gazette (April 22, 1977)

"Carter's Program Flawed, But Fair"

President Carter is asking a great deal of Congress, traditionally wedded to regional considerations, when he asks approval of a bite-the-bullet energy program.

Whether Congress can lay aside parochial outlooks in favor of national interests is the most prominent question to rise in the wake of the President's Wednesday night energy message.

This is not to say that all regional interests should be disregarded in Washington. Circumstances differ widely in various parts of the nation. Public transit, for instance, is out of the question on the western plains. Application of a national energy policy must take these differences into account. The regional interests Congress must abandon to insure the success of the Carter program are the selfish regional interests of energy producers and distributors.

Another important question is how the differences between environmentalists and industrialists can be reconciled.

The coal industry, for example, already has asked how it can fill the role envisioned by Carter while environmental restrictions remain on coal use and coal production.

Some environmentalists, on the other hand, already have expressed the cynical view that the urgency inherent in the Carter program provides the excuse for assaults upon the environment by industry.

Obviously there will have to be compromise. Reasonable guidelines for use and production will have to be forthcoming. American technological ingenuity must be applied to the problem.

As to the ordinary people of America, we see indications that they understand Carter's message—which is a call to this generation to act now to prevent catastrophe a decade hence. The people, asked to shift their thinking radically and adjust their lives to unfamiliar conditions, significantly are not represented among the dissenters who have commented on the Carter proposals.

The President's energy program may be flawed in some areas. It may be too weak, rather than too stringent, in some areas. But by and large we believe it is fair. It seeks to avoid economic damage to wage earners. It denies economic advantage to corporate interests. It offers incentives for conservation. It asks sacrifices where sacrifices are required. We are satisfied with it and urge West Virginia's congressional delegation to support it.

Wisconsin

Milwaukee Journal (April 22, 1977)

"Carter Gives Little Hope to Suppliers"

President Carter Wednesday night presented to the American people the details of a national energy policy which he perceives to be fair and balanced.

Unfortunately, it falls short on both counts because of a marked imbalance in the way it would treat oil and natural gas producers as opposed to consumers.

Although the Carter plan is replete with consumer penalties to promote conservation of oil and natural gas, it also is loaded with rebates and tax credits to reduce some of the sting, and ultimately, we would predict, much of the effectiveness.

Oil and natural gas producers, on the other hand, were left only with a hope that Carter would not push for divestiture by the major companies of their control over various phases of energy production and marketing. He would make this concession, Carter indicated, if he were satisfied with the figures in a new financial reporting system he advocated.

So, for all the tough talk about sacrifice, we find the President once again playing to the galleries. It probably was no surprise to him that he got the loudest applause for those parts of his address which called for maintenance of government controls on oil and gas prices and spoke out against so-called "windfall profits" by energy producers. It sounded very much as if he were trying to keep a scapegoat in reserve in case his plan didn't work out.

Proposals for immediate decontrol of domestic oil and gas prices would be disastrous for the economy "and would not solve long range problems of dwindling supplies," he said.

What nonsense. Given additional revenues with which to explore for more oil and natural gas, it is a virtual certainty that the producers would come up with supplies that would at least slow the decrease in oil and gas reserves.

In fact, if the President wanted to guard against windfall profits, it would be easy enough to merely underwrite exploration to insure that producers would receive at least the cost of production for new findings. The same system is employed now to shore up food prices for farmers.

Actually, removal of price controls would probably be more effective in bringing about conservation than Carter's proposed tax on gasoline, which, ostensibly, would bring the price of domestic oil to the world price level. In either case, conservation would be promoted by higher prices.

This would make more sense than his suggested credit for a proposed increase in the gasoline tax that would start at a nickel a gallon and could work up to 50 cents, but not until at least 10 years had elapsed. Actually, that rebate is one of the weaknesses of the Carter plan.

Let's say the 5-cent-per-gallon increase called for at the outset goes into effect. The cost would represent only about a dollar per tankful of gasoline, an amount to which consumers could easily adjust, especially if a kickback were involved.

To be effective, any price rise incentive for conservation must involve a quantum jump, without any compensation. The high tax proposed for gas guzzling autos is more along this line. That's tough, but it's also realistic in terms of the kind of sacrifice Carter talked about in his fireside chat Monday night.

In any case, it appears that the major conservation effort will revolve around penalties and incentives affecting the new car industry. The gasoline tax probably is a bargaining chip that Carter will barter away as a concession to Congress.

If, in return, he can win a serious commitment to solar energy goals, greater conventional use of coal, the liquefaction of coal and a major

effort to solve the safety problems involved in the use of nuclear energy, more power to him. These are strides that must be made if the nation is to meet its long range goal of a significant reduction in its dependence on foreign oil.

However, any plan that suggests that, in the interim, greater incentives will not be necessary to promote exploration for more oil and natural gas sources is shortsighted.

The Sheboygan Press (April 22, 1977)

"Now It's Up To Congress"

President Carter threw down the gauntlet on the energy crisis Wednesday evening challenging the nation to face the problem which we have so blithely ignored.

Congressional reaction during the speech was limited to eight ripples of applause and the conclusion was marked by nothing more than a courteous acknowledgement. As the President had predicted, it fell far short of an ovation.

Congress was overwhelmed by either the enormity of the problem, the painful solutions which Mr. Carter posed or both.

The problem was punctuated by one fearsome statistic. Today the U.S. is importing 7 million barrels of oil daily. If current trends continue, that will rise to 16 million per day in 1985. That situation becomes even more awesome with the report that within a few years the Soviet Union will be running short of oil and will be competing with the U.S., Europe and Japan for Mideastern oil. Supplies will be tight.

Obviously we cannot go merrily on our way forever increasing our petroleum consumption. It would be grossly unfair to give the next generation an economy dependent on oil when there is none to be had. Not so obvious are the steps to be taken.

We are entering an era of tax incentives and disincentives—of punitive taxes and tax rebates. It seems that a prudent question to ask in these matters is not whether the tax or the rebate hurts, but whether it is fair.

The most legitimate complaint we've heard along those lines relates to rebates for homeowners who insulate between now and December 31, 1984. The complaint came from a patriotic homeowner who followed official urgings and insulated last year. He wouldn't qualify. Such details will inevitably crop up, but they must not be allowed to blur the ultimate goal of conserving energy, particularly petroleum.

The gasoline taxes proposed by Mr. Carter are proving to be the most controversial, although others could prove more costly. Mr. Carter proposes that Americans give themselves until 1979 to reduce their gasoline consumption. If they don't they will then tax themselves a nickel a gallon. If they still continue to increase consumption another nickel would be added in 1980 and each succeeding year through 1987.

The tax would hurt and it would be regressive as all sales taxes are. But it could be made fair, as the President proposes, through adjustments in income tax rates. And, we suggest, the tax could be made even more effective if state gasoline taxes were not allowed as a federal income tax deduction.

These are just a few of the tough decisions Americans must face. The initial one, and perhaps the toughest one, is to convince ourselves that there is or will be a genuine shortage. Once that is done, the costs and inconveniences of conservation will be more tolerable.

President Carter has outlined a program which would conserve fuel. He obviously is not ruling by consensus, for in most respects it is a painful program. The obligation now devolves upon the Congress to accept the bulk of that program, pick up the gauntlet and develop one equally effective or expect history to record it as myopic.

Wyoming

Wyoming State Tribune, Cheyenne (April 20, 1977)

"A Negative Approach"

"Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war."

Those lines from a famous hymn come to mind as President Carter exhorts the nation to consider itself faced with "the moral equivalent of war," a "national catastrophe," and a problem "unprecedented in our history."

Before we all go whooping off down the hill in hot pursuit of Jimmy Carter's Great Energy Conservation Crusade, however, it might do us well to soberly ponder precisely what is in store for the country.

If the United States of America is going to carry this goal to what we think has been ordained for it, where there is a major reduction in the consumption of fuel of all kinds, then the prospects of such a program are going to be tremendous and far-reaching.

Sen. Dewey Bartlett, a Republican who represents the state of Oklahoma and is a former governor of that state, says the Carter program will amount to a disaster for the country and for his state a "cataclysmic, catastrophic calamity." Some may accuse Senator Bartlett of indulging in hyperbole, but we would not. After all, he may be so very right.

On Monday, The Wall Street Journal, anticipating the Carter program, offered an editorial page article written by one of its staffers who specializes in energy matters, Peter B. Roche, and which took some soundings on the expected Carter energy message.

Writes Mr. Roche: "For many years increased gross national product and the number of jobs available to American workers have closely paralleled the amount of energy consumed in the U.S. Because all business activities require energy, jobs and GNP are all naturally interrelated. Over the last 20 years, the use of energy per employed person has increased by nearly 40 per cent while the goods and services produced by each employed person increased a nearly identical amount."

Thus the suggestion is that if there occurs a severe cutback in energy-related activities, there will be a major adverse effect on the economy in many ways beginning very likely with the automobile industry. If there are those who think this is not possible, they are in dire need of having their personal memory banks overhauled. Because less than four years ago the U.S. and the western world for the most part were swept into the severest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s because of the Middle East War and the Arab

oil embargo. And in this country that recession had its first manifestation in the automobile industry.

High gasoline taxes and economic sanctions laid on larger cars will have a major effect on the U.S. economy.

But aside from that, Mr. Roche points out, this also would represent a serious incursion against the somewhat free lifestyle of the American people who like to pick and choose their cars, houses, appliances and other materialistic features of everyday living. They suffer these inconveniences caused by the dictates of government only under extraordinary conditions and emergency circumstances such as they did in World War II most recently, which is probably why President Carter has restored to the theme of a nation at war in attempting to sell his energy program.

But the American people know full well they are not a nation at war, not now anyway, and make-believe will not convince them otherwise.

Roche points up what the alternatives include. The alternative is to plunge ahead with the task at hand, which is to encourage the production of oil and gas, coal and all conventional sources of energy supply, through removal of unwise and inhibitory government regulations which particularly in the case of oil and gas, to say nothing of the generation of electricity, have critically impeded such a development.

But Carter's program will at once feed the fires of inflation through its tax penalties on gasoline and cars that use more than what the government thinks necessary, while at the same time creating unemployment and a lowered GNP by a negative productive approach. Indeed that pretty well sums up the Carter program: It is negative rather than inspired by the need to press forward. And in the long run it will cost the country more than if we did nothing.

II. MAGAZINE EDITORIALS AND COLUMNS

(ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY BY MAGAZINE)

America (April 30, 1977)

"The Moral Equivalent of War"

In proposing his comprehensive energy program to Congress and the people, President Carter has launched an extraordinary attempt to change the American vision of the good life. The changes that the President has called for are in themselves relatively minor. A 10-percent reduction in gasoline consumption, for example, will not radically alter the lives of most people. The crucial significance of such changes, however, lies in the fact that they represent a reversal of a trend, an unfamiliar check on the spiral of rising consumption that has characterized American society increasingly in the last three decades. The political and educational challenge posed by the habits of mind acquired during these years is formidable. We adjust our expectations reluctantly. And when the necessity for change arises out of a situation as complex and as controversial as our energy requirements and resources, it is tempting to simplify the situation and postpone the change by identifying the problem with a convenient villain, whether he be an American oil executive or a Middle Eastern sheik.

But even if one remains suspicious of the sheik's wealth and unpersuaded by the elaborate newspaper ads that explain the righteousness of Mobil Oil, the conspiracy theory is, in the end, only another attempt at evasion. The simple fact is that we have become, in President Carter's words, "the most wasteful nation on earth." Victims of the automobile culture and obsessed by gadgetry, each year we consume an increasingly disproportionate share of the earth's energy resources. To quote the President again: "We waste more energy than we import. With about the same standard of living, we use twice as much energy per person as do other countries like Germany, Japan and Sweden." Public skepticism about the reality of the energy crisis, a skepticism directed toward both the oil companies and the Government, undoubtedly has some foundation, but it cannot explain away the inevitable day of reckoning with our environment.

To prepare for this day of reckoning—at our present rate of consumption the world's oil reserves would be exhausted by 1985—a massive program of education is needed, one that will test the Government and the people. The President took a phrase of William James to describe this test, "the moral equivalent of war." It will require on the part of the Government an uncompromising determination to see that the burdens of retrenchment will be distributed fairly. It cannot be business as usual for any privileged interest in American society, including, one might point out, the notoriously wasteful Department of Defense. The ordinary citizen of the United States must realize

that we all have a stake in future consequences of energy conservation: an economy that continues to grow and supply jobs, a national integrity that is not vulnerable to foreign boycotts.

American Catholics have another reason for commitment to the President's call for a more sparing use of energy. This month marks the 10th anniversary of Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *The Development of Peoples* (*Populorum Progressio*). Speaking at a ceremony in Rome that marked the anniversary, British economist and author Barbara Ward (Lady Jackson) criticized the failure of Christians in the industrialized nations to come to terms with world crises of economy, environment and energy. The division between the rich minority and the poor majority, she pointed out, has only grown in the 10 years since the publication of *The Development of Peoples*. The fact that the planet's resources continue to shrink before the overconsumption of the few is more alarming now than it was 10 years ago. Lady Jackson called for "an end to the appalling waste of resources that in some societies has reached a point at which 50 percent of the society's main resource—energy—is actually allowed to flow off into space."

A more efficient use of energy and a more modest style of life may not only answer the summons of Jimmy Carter and Barbara Ward for greater conservation, it may also lead to the rediscovery of some old satisfactions. More walking and less driving will clear the air and strengthen the heart. Families may discover that air-conditioning in summer and overheated rooms in winter are not the real conditions of a happy home. We may discover one of the secrets shared by the philosophers and the evangelists: the pleasures of a simpler, uncluttered, less driven life.

Business Week (April 25, 1977)

"Realism in Energy Use"

President Carter and his energy adviser, James R. Schlesinger, have made the right choice in shaping their long-awaited energy program (page 66). They are putting the major stress on conservation rather than on development of new energy sources. This strategy not only provides earlier results but also promises to hold down the long-run cost of the program.

Conservation of energy need not involve a massive sacrifice for the U.S. In the short run, it is feasible for the nation to use energy at least 20 percent more efficiently than it currently does. Over a longer period, a gain of 50 percent or more is possible. To make these savings will require only a little self-restraint. Capital investment will be considerably smaller than what would be needed to bring in new supply sources.

It is important, however, for the Administration and Congress to choose the right methods for promoting conservation. The government should not try to dictate exactly how energy consumption is to be cut. It should set obtainable goals for autos, homes, factories, and consumer good, leaving the "how" to the market. It should remove price controls on oil and gas, permitting the price system to allocate supplies.

The market response to prices can be reinforced by taxes and incentives. A gasoline tax would be unpopular, but Congress should consider

one seriously. Better fuel mileage in autos could achieve such enormous energy savings that Washington can hardly afford to depend on auto design standards alone. The income tax system can rebate some of these taxes to low-income people who would feel the increase the most.

Homeowners will need financial assistance to install insulation in existing homes. And some industries will need help in financing energy-saving investment. A government loan or a tax credit, paid for out of the tax on gasoline, would resolve this problem. The whole energy program should be framed so that it finances itself and does not add to the federal deficit.

And it should be framed to help the United States adjust to the fact that energy is no longer abundant and cheap. The nation must make the most of what it has.

Forbes (May 15, 1977)

"Most of the President's Energy Plan Will Come to Pass"
because the majority of Americans are not as dumb as most politicians give them credit for, are not always so totally dominated by selfish self-interest as Special Interests like to believe.

Carter's got to win most of his energy fight because, with every passing day of unbridled gas guzzling, we're that much faster more nearly out of the stuff.

Time is—has—run out on palliatives, Band-Aids, silly slogans of "an energy independent America."

Everyone seems agreed about the 1980's bringing in a crisis. Most of us don't seem to realize that the 1980's are only 31 months away.

The Carter program will be picked and pecked and pummeled—but not to death because the President's dead right about the reality of the crisis and the necessity of comprehensive action.

The Nation (May 7, 1977)

"The Uphill Road"

Two ominous events surrounded the President's proclamation of the Energy Crisis. The first was a natural catastrophe (when the oil well in the North Sea blew) and the other was a Congressional threat (when Senate Majority Leader Byrd quietly said that the Senate would have to stop all other work in order to handle Carter's energy legislation).

The oil spill underlines the need for something like his energy conservation program, and soon. The Byrd statement shows how hard it will be to pass the necessary laws.

The blowout on Bravo platform of the well operated by Phillips Petroleum Corp. in Norwegian waters emphasizes the desperate lengths to which the Western world has gone to keep up its high-consumption ways. It also proves how extremely and inherently unsafe are these underwater wells. Whether or not that well is promptly capped, it should be noted that oil was escaping into the notoriously dangerous waters of the North Sea at a rate that in two weeks would match the pollution from the tanker *Torrey Canyon* in 1967.

Scores of other wells in that tricky water could blow at any time, and there will be hundreds more of them before Britain has completed its drive for energy self-sufficiency. Those who suspect President Carter of exaggerating the need for conservation would do well to remember that, according to the oil industry's present plans, the waters off America's East Coast, those near the world's greatest fisheries, will soon be sprouting oil rigs in serried rows.

Almost no one questions the need for drastic measures to curb our appetite for energy. The debate is over how to achieve that end, and it is heating up. Senator Byrd's soft-spoken warning to Carter, that he has put too much on the plate of Congress to allow room for any legislation other than energy bills, is a serious matter. It amounts to a deliberate slowdown of the Congressional production line.

The legislators' way to deal with measures that face resistance from the interest groups is to complicate their procedures. There will be endless hearings and intricate juggling before even a single law is passed that will change the way energy is now handled. Carter, who was not born yesterday, had no doubt that this was what would happen; that is why he warned against the special interests in his TV address of mid-April. That warning will, of course, not do the job all by itself. It will have to be repeated again and again, probably in rising tones.

The nature of the main opposition to Carter's proposal was well summarized in a statement by Howard Baker, Republican Minority Leader of the Senate, on April 25. Said Baker, "We can produce our way out of this." He meant that we could get out of the present bind not primarily by conserving energy but by producing more and more of it—and that would take "incentives." Who would get the benefit of those incentives? Why industry, to be sure, the very firms that have stimulated the American people into becoming the guzzling consumers who only yesterday were boasting of the world's highest standard of living.

Whatever they pretend, however oily their pieties, what Baker and his corporate friends take is the infinitesimally short view. Their policies would lead to a bonanza splurge for the corporations in the energy business, until the fossil fuel supplies ran out as the price hit the stratosphere. That, some people know, is not the way to go.

Whether the Carter way is altogether the right one is another matter. It seems radical only because it is so comprehensive, because it purports to grapple with most of the factors in the energy equation. For the first time the basic questions have been faced. But the answers are quite conservative, as one would expect from a program put together by Carter, with Schlesinger, the dour technocrat, leaning over his shoulder.

The fact that it has been generally hailed by the Establishment bien-pensants kills any notion that it means to disturb the corporate way that things are done in this country. As The New York Times said of Schlesinger and his boss, they "will have done their initial work well if, in the end, the public at last finds the price that is right." That is a rather puzzling formation because the truth is that the public has little say in all this. If ever prices were administered by a few big combines, it is in the field of energy.

Reactionary economists like Milton Friedman can talk all they like about people voting with their feet (meaning dollars) in the marketplace. But how can they escape the pricing mechanism of oil's Seven Sisters, which also seems to control the prices of the so-called "independents"? (See David Zielenziger's "Collusion at the Gas Pump: 'Independents' They Are Not," on p. 551, this issue.) Friedman, by the way (Newsweek, May 2), calls the Carter-Schlesinger proposals a bureaucratic "monstrosity" and pines, as usual, for the free market he will not admit is long dead and gone. On the same page where Friedman's lament appears, his fellow-Nobelista Paul A. Samuelson generally approves the plan, seeing in it a proper mix of "rhetoric, price penalties, pecuniary subsidies and outright flats in strategic proportions."

It has been estimated that to implement the program will take at least twenty-five separate pieces of legislation. These laws will be subjected to all the arts of the loophole, in which Congress specializes. They must get by both Sen. Henry Jackson, the energy dean, and Sen. Russell Long of the Finance Committee, friend of the special interests, most particularly of oil.

It will be a long, hard, uphill road. At this point one can only hope that the general interest, as against the special interests, will be uppermost in Carter's mind as he pushes all the way.

Time (April 25, 1977)

"The Nightmare Life Without Fuel"

Americans are so used to limitless energy supplies that they can hardly imagine what life might be like when the fuel really starts to run out. So TIME asked Science Writer Isaac Asimov for his vision of an energy-poor society that might exist at the end of the 20th century. The following portrait, Asimov noted, "need not prove to be accurate. It is a picture of the worst, of waste continuing, of oil running out, of nothing in its place, of world population continuing to rise. But then, that could happen, couldn't it?"

So it's 1997, and it's raining, and you'll have to walk to work again. The subways are crowded, and any given train breaks down one morning out of five. The buses are gone, and on a day like today the bicycles slosh and slide. Besides, you have only a mile and a half to go, and you have boots, raincoat and rain hat. And it's not a very cold rain, so why not?

Lucky you have a job in demolition too. It's steady work. Slow and dirty, but steady. The fading structures of a decaying city are the great mineral mines and hardware shops of the nation. Break them down and re-use the parts. Coal is too difficult to dig up and transport to give us energy in the amounts we need, nuclear fission is judged to be too dangerous, the technical breakthrough toward nuclear fusion that we hoped for never took place, and solar batteries are too expensive to maintain on the earth's surface in sufficient quantity.

Anyone older than ten can remember automobiles. They dwindled. At first the price of gasoline climbed—way up. Finally only the well-

to-do drove, and that was too clear an indication that they were filthy rich, so any automobile that dared show itself on a city street was overturned and burned. Rationing was introduced to "equalize sacrifice," but every three months the ration was reduced. The cars just vanished and became part of the metal resource.

There are many advantages, if you want to look for them. Our 1997 newspapers continually point them out. The air is cleaner and there seem to be fewer colds. Against most predictions, the crime rate has dropped. With the police car too expensive (and too easy a target), policemen are back on their beats. More important, the streets are full. Legs are king in the cities of 1997, and people walk everywhere far into the night. Even the parks are full, and there is mutual protection in crowds.

If the weather isn't too cold, people sit out front. If it is hot, the open air is the only air conditioning they get. And at least the street lights still burn. Indoors, electricity is scarce, and few people can afford to keep lights burning after supper.

As for the winter—well, it is inconvenient to be cold, with most of what furnace fuel is allowed hoarded for the dawn; but sweaters are popular indoor wear and showers are not an everyday luxury. Luke-warm sponge baths will do, and if the air is not always very fragrant in the human vicinity, the automobile fumes are gone.

There is some consolation in the city that it is worse in the suburbs. The suburbs were born with the auto, lived with the auto, and are dying with the auto. One way out for the suburbanites is to form associations that assign turns to the procurement and distribution of food. Pushcarts creak from house to house along the posh suburban roads, and every bad snowstorm is a disaster. It isn't easy to hoard enough food to last till the roads are open. There is not much in the way of refrigeration except for the snowbanks, and then the dogs must be fought off.

What energy is left cannot be directed into personal comfort. The nation must survive until new energy sources are found, so it is the railroads and subways that are receiving major attention. The railroads must move the coal that is the immediate hope, and the subways can best move the people.

And then, of course, energy must be conserved for agriculture. The great car factories make trucks and farm machinery almost exclusively. We can huddle together when there is a lack of warmth, fan ourselves should there be no cooling breezes, sleep or make love at such times as there is a lack of light—but nothing will for long ameliorate a lack of food. The American population isn't going up much any more, but the food supply must be kept high even though the prices and difficulty of distribution force each American to eat less. Food is needed for export so that we can pay for some trickle of oil and for other resources.

The rest of the world, of course, is not as lucky as we are. Some cynics say that it is the knowledge of this that helps keep America from despair. They're starving out there, because earth's population has continued to go up. The population on earth is 5.5 billion, and outside the United States and Europe, not more than one in five has enough to eat at any given time.

All the statistics point to a rapidly declining rate of population increases, but that is coming about chiefly through a high infant mortality; the first and most helpless victims of starvation are babies, after their mothers have gone dry. A strong current of American opinion, as reflected in the newspapers (some of which still produce their daily eight pages of bad news), holds that it is just as well. It serves to reduce the population, doesn't it?

Others point out that it's more than just starvation. There are those who manage to survive on barely enough to keep the body working, and that proves to be not enough for the brain. It is estimated that there are now nearly 2 billion people in the world who are alive but who are permanently brain-damaged by undernutrition, and the number is growing year by year. It has already occurred to some that it would be "realistic" to wipe them out quietly and rid the earth of an encumbering menace. The American newspapers of 1997 do not report that this is actually being done anywhere, but some travelers bring back horror tales.

At least the armies are gone—no one can afford to keep those expensive, energy-gobbling monstrosities. Some soldiers in uniform and with rifles are present in almost every still functioning nation, but only the United States and the Soviet Union can maintain a few tanks, planes and ships—which they dare not move for fear of biting into limited fuel reserves.

Energy continues to decline, and machines must be replaced by human muscle and beasts of burden. People are working longer hours and there is less leisure; but then, with electric lighting restricted, television for only three hours a night, movies three evenings a week, new books few and printed in small editions, what is there to do with leisure? Work, sleep and eating are the great trinity of 1997, and only the first two are guaranteed.

Where will it end? It must end in a return to the days before 1800, to the days before the fossil fuels powered a vast machine industry and technology. It must end in subsistence farming and in a world population reduced by starvation, disease and violence to less than a billion.

And what can we do to prevent all this now?

Now? Almost nothing.

If we had started 20 years ago, that might have been another matter. If we had only started 50 years ago, it would have been easy.

U.S. News & World Report (April 25, 1977)

"A Call to All Americans" (By Marvin Stone)

President Carter's costly and ambitious energy program faces some formidable obstacles. Ostable No. 1 is people.

Millions of people have so little confidence in Washington that they despair whether the White House and Congress really know what they are doing or, if they do, whether they are capable of executing a massive program in an intelligent way.

Secondly, millions of Americans distrust the big oil companies, the electric-utility companies and the auto companies with such fervor that they are convinced this program means only that the rich companies will get richer at their expense.

Those are open scars, antagonisms that lie very close to the surface of national life. But there is more: People are complaining openly and bitterly about environmentalists' being as serious a threat to the energy program as what they insist is Washington's stupidity and industry's cupidity.

A great many folks in this country are fed up with the tactics of environmentalists who selectively choose their targets (and their pet judges) to force costly delays or outright cancellations of vital energy projects.

The Carter program calls not only for volunteer effort, but for sacrifice by ordinary citizens. But many of these citizens are asking: "Why should I put myself out any further? If this is a crisis, why aren't we demanding that the environmentalists call off their costly warfare, and compromise instead?"

Our hearts go out, because all of us are environmentalists at heart, who does not want to breathe clean air, drink pure water, gaze out over unsullied landscapes?

But we should not get misty-eyed dwelling on it, for our heads tell us another story: Without clear air, we may cough; without energy, we go back to an economic Stone Age.

Thus: Attempts to extract our estimated 64 to 130 billion barrels of offshore oil—a 10-year supply—must not be tied up forever in court, despite the understandable distaste of shoreline dwellers.

Thus: Nuclear power plants that are judged essential—and the President says he intends to hold them to a reasonable minimum—must be allowed to go forward after safety requirements have been fulfilled. We should call a halt to the endless pitched battles that use up 11 years before an atomic utility can be brought into operation.

Thus: Hydroelectric dams must be built even if they endanger a tiny fish called the snail darter or a flower known as the furbish lousewort. Human survival comes first.

Greatest hopes of all are placed in our 90-year to 400-year reserve of coal. But coal, too, has its problems. Environmental blocks are the chief force in holding coal production in 1976 to a miserly 2.6 percent gain over 1975. Eastern coal is mostly sulphurous and burns with acrid fumes, costly to remove. Regulations have been hard to meet or enforce. Easier methods of purifying are under test. For the near future, however, if plants converting to coal do not achieve clean-air standards, we may have to suffer discomfort.

Western coal is relatively clean. If the railways can upgrade their roadbeds, substantial amounts can be shipped east. Dwellers in towns along the way would have to suffer the incessant rumble of hopper-car wheels. But that is far from being the biggest barrier. The West's immense seams of coal are close under the grass, and the ground after strip mining lies like an open sore until leveled and replanted. The least the inhabitants can demand is restoration of the land, where feasible. But the coal has got to come out.

To put this country on the road to self-sufficiency will be a struggle. In the end the fight is for survival of our society. *All* Americans should understand that.

III. COLUMNISTS

(ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY BY COLUMNIST)

Russell Baker, Chicago Tribune (April 24, 1977)

"Finding an Enemy in the Energy War"

NEW YORK.—Most Americans have lived through enough wars to realize that you can't have a war without an enemy. Now, however, President Carter has declared the moral equivalent of war, and the combat lines are fuzzy.

We have never fought a moral equivalent of war before, so there is no experience to tell us whether we need an enemy or not. The acronym for Moral Equivalent of War is, of course, MEOW, which makes it sound like a pussy-cat affair, but one should not count too much on the happenstance of alphabet in trying to foresee the development of this unusual affair.

The President seems to think he can conduct a MEOW successfully with nothing more for an enemy than that unconvincing old bogey, the energy crisis. This seems doubtful in view of the frequent polls showing that perhaps half the population doesn't believe there is an energy crisis.

A handsome majority of Americans, if congressmen are to be believed, are ready to fight anybody who tries to cut down on their motor-ing pleasure, energy crisis or not. Since this is precisely what Carter aims to do, he is in danger of losing the moral equivalent in the opening skirmishes unless he can produce a more blood-curdling enemy than the energy crisis.

The reasons so many Americans do not believe in the energy crisis are too occult to bear much rational examination. One may be the flaccidity of the term itself; "energy crisis" is a limp and bloodless abstraction which does not fire the imagination to the white heat needed to animate combat. For nearly 50 years now Americans have lived constantly with one crisis or another, many of them with a much fiercer sound than "energy crisis," and survived to drive bigger cars than ever.

Nor can we ignore the simple-minded but powerful belief that the oil will simply never run out. Many Americans, obviously, are as incapable of believing that oil is finite as youth is of believing it can ever die or children are of believing they can ever grow old.

Here is a simple immutable refusal to accept reality, or to face life if you will. Refusing to face life is not an altogether useless human characteristic, since life is often more than many a poor devil can tolerate if it has to be faced fulltime. In any event, to many Americans, facing a life without gasoline is a trail too bleak to be contemplated. Unless Carter finds ways to bring them under his banner, he is badly

launched on his moral equivalent and may have his bones picked at the Capitol by Christmas.

To enlist troops on his side he may require an enemy more interesting than the energy crisis. For this reason, this is not the best of times for the oil, gas, and coal industries. They are already in low repute, and particularly the oil and gas people for their healthy profits following upon the Arab embargo of 1973.

The coal people, with their resistance to the surprisingly strong environmental protection movement, also come with a large ready-made supply of enemies. If one were a President gravely best in the moral equivalent of battle, and if one desperately needed an enemy who would rally the masses to the battle, one might be tempted to point the sword at the oil, gas, and coal folks.

This is not to suggest that the President wants such a battle. The producers have mighty weapons of their own in Congress, and no President challenges them except at grave peril. Nevertheless, the producers must naturally feel a bit uneasy than usual about the new situation.

The necessities of their position force them to take issue with the main line of the President's energy policy. This aims at reducing consumption by raising prices and recycling the profits back into the economy as incentives to conservation. Not unnaturally, the producers find this a cumbersome, ineffectual and deleterious interference with the free market. Being market operators, they naturally want to take the profits from price rises and redistribute them as they believe wisest for the economy.

Their early line on the President's program has it that he has erred by emphasizing conservation rather than new production. To increase production, they say, requires more money incentives for the industry.

The economies of this argument are infinitely debatable, but the politics of it may be very dangerous for the producers. Already suspect by public opinion, they are asking for a greater share of the pie at a time when everybody's fuel bills are about to soar again. By arguing that production rather than conservation is the key to an energy solution, they are challenging the President's declaration that the fuel is running out.

If the President needs an enemy for his moral equivalent, the producers sit directly in the line of fire. It would be some MEOW.

William F. Buckley, Jr., *The Boston Globe* (April 29, 1977)

"What's Right—and Wrong About Carter Energy Plan"

What's right about the Carter energy plan?

It resists, for the most part, the temptations of economic interventionists to fix prices below the level they would rise to under the free play of economic pressure. It resists rationing, or outright proscription (for instance, of the big car). Anybody who wants to can still buy a big car and drive it around the block all day and all night, if that is his pleasure and he can afford to indulge it.

What's wrong with the Carter energy plan? Two things.

1—It appears to accept as the price of oil the administered price of the OPEC exporters. It seems only yesterday that the whole of the in-

dustrialized world was united in the resentment over the quadrupling of the price of oil by the OPEC powers. During those heated days, drastic acts of retaliation were openly discussed, including at one point the possibility of military action.

That no formula for breaking down the cartel was hit upon hardly argues for the abandoning of the search for such a formula. After all, during the same period we had no energy policy. Now that we are formulating an energy policy, ought it not to be conjoined with the policy directed at the cartel that is maintaining its prices at synthetically high levels?

Surely we need direct action against \$14 oil and the best way to get it is to lay down discriminatory tariffs against the OPEC powers, taxing the imported barrel according as the producing nation is profiteering from the captive markets.

Saudi Arabia, which spends 18 cents to bring up a barrel of oil, would be taxed more heavily than, say, Venezuela, which spends a couple of dollars. If a \$10 import tax were put on Saudi oil, and an \$8 tax on Venezuelan oil, the pressure on the Saudis to reduce their prices (thus fracturing the cartel) would be considerable. As it stands, all Carter's references to permitting the price of U.S. oil to rise gradually to the "market" price are misleading, inasmuch as there is no market price. The price is the cartel price.

2—There is all that dashing about with sacks of dollars by government messengers looking for insulators, small car buyers, poor people, which messengers will surely lose their sense of direction before they are through.

The higher cost of fuel should go straight to the producers. That much of it that is "windfall" should be exempt from taxation—so long as it is invested in exploration, development or the search for substitute fuel sources. If the oil companies succeed, then the benefits will inure to all U.S. consumers. If they fail, then the windfall profits will realize nothing.

The notion that we should accept the responsibility for diminishing the burden of the poorer consumers by the use of proceeds which should be devoted to the search for new fuels is intellectually distracting. We don't remit to the poorer people a part of the taxes paid by richer people on cigarettes and whiskey: Rich and poor alike pay the same taxes on these commodities. So should it be with oil. So was it with food when, three summers ago, the price of grain and of meat rose so steeply.

Our concern for the poor should be a concern for their standard of living and there are sound reasons to argue for direct subsidies at that standard of living. But there is no argument that doesn't serve to complicate the responsibility of the well-off for the less well-off for impounding tax revenues from the sale of a particular product and using them as the source of redistributionism.

Help for the poor should come from general reserves, not from surpluses created by a tax designed to reduce demand and increase supply. One suspects that President Carter is playing politics here. Let him do so, but let others refuse to play. We're not only engaged in fighting a fuel shortage, but in establishing important precedents.

Marquis Childs, The Washington Post (April 26, 1977)

"Curbing America's Gluttony for Fuel"

In the judgment of a longtime participant in government at various levels, President Carter has undertaken a task more formidable than that of any man who has ever held the office. He is proposing to bring under control the revolution worked by the motor car, the jet plane and all the devices that have rested on fossil fuels. He is jarring awake the American people who for decades have depended on the private motor car.

What is more extraordinary is that he needn't have done this. Short of some upheaval such as another Middle East oil embargo, he could, in all probability, have drifted through a first term and perhaps even a second four years.

Both Presidents Nixon and Ford warned of the perils of the energy crisis. But they did nothing about it beyond rhetoric. Once the immediate impact of the embargo of 1973, with long lines at the gasoline pumps, was over, the old ways were back. Sure, we could go on forever, with 6 percent of the world's population using 30 percent of its resources.

So Jimmy Carter has jumped into the fire of a fierce controversy. Other Presidents have endured fearful torments. Lincoln hoped to save the union without a war but after the Confederate firing on Fort Sumter, whatever hopes he still cherished were gone. Pearl Harbor opened the way to the war Franklin Roosevelt had sought against the Fascist powers, and when Hitler made one of the gravest errors of his mad career by declaring war against the United States, the President was given a go-ahead to save Britain and drive the Nazis out of Western Europe.

In his encyclopedic and yet fascinating book "The Glorious Burden," Stefan Lorant shows the Presidents from Washington through Ford and up to Carter enduring the torments of the office. Their course was shaped by events over which, in the crunch, they had little or no control.

Almost completely unknown two years ago, the peanut farmer from south Georgia has chosen a course that is rough and uphill most of the way. Will he succeed in changing the habits of millions of Americans who have gone on for decades in their own private, individualistic ways?

It is too early to say. There will certainly be delays in Congress, and these delays may ultimately deaden the impact of the program so that its thrust will be lost in a welter of dispute. One weakness, it seems to me, was to rely in the first phase on voluntary conservation. The President might have called for an immediate increase in the gas tax, therefore forcing a quick showdown with Congress. This could also have meant a quick and perhaps fatal setback if Congress said no.

Opinion both on Capitol Hill and in the country has it that the gas tax has little or no chance of passage. There are even those who believe it was put in by Carter as a bargaining chip to be abandoned as he discarded the \$50 tax rebate. Nothing in his record shows any reluctance to throw overboard whatever may seem to be inconvenient or self-defeating.

Given the equalization process in the cost of crude oil, as called for in the Carter program, the price of gas at the pump is sure to go up regardless of what happens to the tax. Price as a deterrent is open to serious doubt. A colleague just returned from Italy reports that with gasoline at \$2.40 a gallon, city streets are as jammed with traffic as ever and the freeways are buzzing with motorists going 90 miles an hour.

One may argue that the Italians, given their record on income tax collection, are an anarchic people. But it is well to look at our own record before making any optimistic predictions about the success of conservation through car pooling and public transportation.

With the whole world watching, it will be a test of our self-discipline and our capacity to respond as a nation to what is unquestionably a great crisis that can mean so much for the future of our children and grandchildren. In his television address Carter called it the moral equivalent of war.

This was the title of a book by the distinguished American philosopher William James, published not long before his death in 1910. As an anti-imperialist and anti-militarist at a time when Theodore Roosevelt, after the American victory in the Spanish-American War, was leading the United States into the distant shores of colonialism in Asia, James summed up his belief in the book that national service for the good of the nation could be a substitute for war. That is Carter's concept in calling for a radical restructuring of American society.

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Ernest Conine, Los Angeles Times (April 25, 1977)

"Energy Issue Puts Squeeze Play on Carter—Making Good on His 'Equal Sacrifice' Vow Is the Acid Test"

With the best will in the world, President Carter is going to have a very tough time delivering on his promise that his far-reaching energy program will be fair—that it will demand "equal sacrifices from every region, every class of people, every interest group."

It is extremely important, of course, for him to try—and be seen by the people as trying—to translate this promise into reality.

The American people have demonstrated that they are capable of great sacrifice—far more than would be required of them by the President's energy program. But they must be persuaded, first, that the sacrifice is really necessary and, second, that the burden is fairly shared.

In the case of Carter's energy program, meeting the first imperative is hard enough. Many, many people still prefer to believe that the energy crisis is a sham. And Congress, unfortunately, has an over-supply of nonstatesmen who would rather nurture illusion than confront reality.

The President, however, will find it even harder to deliver on his equality-of-sacrifice promise. For example:

A 5-cent-a-gallon increase in gasoline prices requires far less sacrifice from a New York secretary who commutes to work on the train than from a Californian who lives in Pacoima and drives 20 miles to and from work every day.

High utility bills will, by their nature, hurt the poor but not the rich. It's easier for the fellow with a 10-room house and a heated swimming pool to adjust by using less gas and electricity than for the little old lady who lives in a one-room apartment. And whereas the affluent can take advantage of tax credits to buy energy-saving home insulation or solar heating units, the not-so-affluent simply don't have the money for such investments.

There are bound to be regional inequities, too.

For many Americans who live east of the Mississippi River, an automobile is a luxury; for most Americans in the West and Southwest, it is a necessity.

The auto worker in Michigan or Georgia or California faces the risk, under the President's plan, of being hit twice: He not only would have to pay higher fuel prices the same as everybody else, but if the tax on gas-guzzlers caused a falloff in auto sales, he might lose his job as well.

The same is true of people whose livelihoods depend upon the American yen for the open road; if higher energy prices achieve their conservation purpose, there will be fewer travelers spending money at motels, roadside restaurants, ski lodges and fishing resorts.

The Carter plan seeks to ease the pain by providing, in effect, for returning with one hand the money it takes from people in higher fuel taxes with the other.

The details still aren't clear. But the general idea is to maintain consumer buying power—and therefore alleviate individual hardships and avoid setting off a new recession—by returning all the money collected in fuel taxes to the economy through some combination of income-tax reductions, special payments and other steps.

A key factor in the Carter plan is that the size of the tax deduction or payment would bear no relation to the amount of fuel taxes a particular person has paid. This means that the fellow who held down his energy consumption could actually come out ahead, while the citizen who didn't might not get enough back from the government to pay his higher fuel and utility bills.

Such a system, if enacted, will go a long way toward preventing undue hardship for low-income Americans. But it won't remove inequities; those individuals and regions which depend least on the automobile will still come out better than those where distances are long and public transportation is sparse or unavailable.

Perfect justice is not attainable, of course, in an imperfect world. The amount of sacrifice required by the President's proposal is not all that great in any event, nor are the inequalities of sacrifice all that serious.

To some extent, inequities would balance out. Californians would sacrifice more in higher gasoline bills, but Easterners would make their sacrifice in terms of higher heating bills.

Beyond that, the impact would be spread over a period of time, giving us time to adjust.

The tax on gas-guzzling cars would be imposed in steps, giving the auto makers time to adjust their production and marketing systems to the emphasis on smaller cars.

Higher gasoline taxes would not begin before January, 1979—and would not be imposed then or later if fuel conservation goals were

met. And while these taxes would hurt some people more than others, an intelligent system of recycling the money back to consumers would mean that very few people, poor or otherwise, would suffer genuine hardship.

But the initial congressional reaction suggests that the President is going to find it very difficult to win approval for the gasoline tax portion of his plan. The danger is that, in the name of correcting regional and other inequities, Congress will grant so many exceptions that the legislation will become a meaningful mishmash. Or, resistance to the gasoline tax increase may cause harmful delays in the whole program.

Carter might do himself and his program a favor by reconsidering whether sharply higher gasoline taxes will really produce enough dividends in conservation to make up for the problems—political and otherwise—which they raise.

Gasoline consumption by automobiles, after all, accounts for only about 12% of U.S. energy use; the biggest potential for conservation lies in fuel and power consumption by business and industry.

To the degree that gasoline conservation is feasible, the combination of penalty taxes on purchase of gas-guzzling cars and rebates for purchase of energy-efficient vehicles is likely to be far more effective than higher gasoline taxes anyway.

But while Congress has the right and the duty to make constructive changes in Carter's program, it will do the American people a serious disservice if it fails to enact legislation which will substantially meet the goals set by the President.

We live in a world where oil and gas reserves are being used up faster than new energy supplies can be developed, we have no choice but to curtail our energy consumption. The only question is whether we begin to do it now, while there is still time for only moderately painful adjustments, or wait until it's too late to avoid the "catastrophe" of which the President warned.

If we choose the latter course, the question of "equal sacrifice" will be the least of our worries.

William R. Diem, The Plain Dealer, Cleveland (April 23, 1977)

"Did Carters Energy Plan Go Far Enough?"

Did President Carter scare you, talking about the emerging energy crisis as a national catastrophe if we don't do something about it; calling for the moral equivalent of war to attack the problem; calling for sacrifices and big taxes to discourage Americans from driving so much or burning gas and oil in boilers?

It was a sobering message for a lot of people—but not for Richard J. Anderson, now an Ohio State University professor, who has been preaching impending energy disaster for years.

In his opinion, Carter was not forceful enough.

"Carter did say the right things," Anderson conceded. "He said this was comparable to a war, and it certainly is. It's comparable to the worst war we've ever been in.

"But he said it so calmly that I think it went over the heads of some of the people who listened."

Anderson is a consultant to the energy program of Battelle Memorial Institute in Columbus, which he directed until his retirement last year.

He has appeared at innumerable gatherings of people who are concerned about the energy problem and has presented a consistent message. It is this:

The nation and the world are running out of oil and natural gas. Unless people learn to use what remains with greater efficiency, or to develop new energy sources to replace petroleum, there are going to be devastating consequences to the economy here and elsewhere in the world.

President Carter said this April 19: "The oil and gas we rely on for 75 percent of our energy are running out. In spite of our increased effort, domestic production has been dropping steadily at about 6 percent a year. Imports have doubled in the last five years. Our nation's interdependence of economic and political action is becoming increasingly constrained. Unless profound changes are made to lower oil consumption, we now believe that early in the 1980s the world will be demanding more oil than it can produce."

Carter said, as had John F. O'Leary, federal energy administrator, in a speech earlier in Cleveland, that the world is using 60 million barrels of oil a day and to continue meeting this demand would require discovery of a new Texas worth of oil a year, a new North Slope of Alaska every nine months or a new Saudi Arabia every three years.

Texas produces about three million barrels of oil a day. The North Slope of Alaska may be able to produce two million barrels a day by 1978. Saudi Arabia produces about nine million barrels a day and may be able to scale up to 15 million barrels a day in future years. Together, these are the world's big oil producers. And they are able to turn out 20 million barrels of the world's daily demand of 60 million barrels of oil. That is one-third of it.

That is why President Carter and John O'Leary and Dick Anderson are worried about energy.

To be sure, there are other people who say the world has plenty of energy. An Associated Press article that appeared in *The Plain Dealer* last Monday reported that a world conference of geologists, economists and systems analysts, gathered last July in Austria, concluded there is oil and gas enough to last 100 years, "albeit at a substantially higher cost."

That is a phrase to remember in energy discussions: "albeit at a substantially higher cost."

There may exist in Ohio alone more natural gas energy than has ever been produced in Louisiana, according to an official of the Ohio Energy and Resource Development Agency. But can it be got out? That is the problem. It is locked tightly in shale formations below ground. Maybe it will be tapped, says the official, if gas brings a price high enough to make worthwhile the risk of capital investment in its recovery.

There exists in western states of the United States more energy in oil shale than the world has in coal, say other experts. And that is a lot of energy—enough to last the world 300 to 400 years. But can it be recovered at prices competitive with today's world oil prices at around

\$13 a barrel—even though these have risen by a factor of five since 1973? Not yet, according to the experts, which includes oil companies * * *.

Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, *The Washington Post* (April 30, 1977)

"Putting in Rebates, Putting Out Detroit"

When dazed representatives of U.S. and foreign auto manufacturers left the White House April 18 after a briefing on the energy program, they came to this puzzled conclusion: President Carter's energy team has no idea of how his small-car rebate program will work.

The auto makers were quite correct. At this writing, the President's men are not an inch closer to figuring out how to hurry an energy-saving switch from big to smaller cars without dislocating the automotive industry and the U.S. economy.

"I would say our best hope lies with the UAW," one Cabinet member confided to us. The remark betrays secret support within the administration for the politically influential United Auto Workers to succeed in knocking out the small-car rebate and the "gas-guzzler" punitive tax, permitting Detroit to gradually adjust to the federal government's present gas-economy regulations without disrupting the sensitive industry.

But the Carter proposals, even if never passed, could cause disruptions in Detroit not envisioned at the White House during three months of drafting the program. For this reason, economic pollster Albert Sindlinger says the energy program could be "an economic Pearl Harbor—a tragic outcome of the President's laudable effort to come to grips with energy.

This warning results from the nature of the program as the creation of two men—Jimmy Carter and energy czar James Schlesinger—sharing an ascetic dislike for big, fast cars. Business-oriented administration officials more aware of the consequences of fiddling with the delicate automotive market were not consulted until the eleventh hour.

So, hours before Carter's fireside chat on energy, automotive representatives came to the White House for a briefing. S. David Freeman, Schlesinger's aide, confirmed that new gas-guzzlers would be heavily taxed and that purchasers of new economy cars would receive rebates.

Would the rebate go to buyers of foreign cars, which are preferred by American motorists over their U.S. competitors? Although this is now denied by the administration, Freeman's answer is clearly indicated in the notes taken by those present: The U.S. would pay the rebate on foreign cars only if imports were limited to the "traditional" share of the U.S. market by each country, to be spelled out in new agreements.

The automakers present, foreign and domestic, considered this an obvious violation of international trading rules. When one asked whether the tax against gas-guzzlers would not sufficiently spur small-car sales without rebate, Freeman replied that "econometric models indicated otherwise." Confidence in his grasp of the issue was not enhanced when Freeman suggested foreign manufacturers could build more plants in the United States if they did not like the new program.

Two days later, the administration's energy "fact sheet" confirmed

Freeman's briefing. Without mentioning "traditional" shares of the market, it said the rebate would be paid for foreign cars on the basis of agreements trade negotiator Robert S. Strauss would work out.

Just how Strauss, who was no party to this arrangement, is supposed to negotiate such agreements is a mystery to everybody connected with international trade. Thus, hope grows in Washington that UAW muscle will knock out the small-car rebate to prevent building still higher the mountain of trade problems confronting Strauss.

The rebate combined with the gas-guzzler tax is shown by Sindlinger's national telephone surveys as causing car owners to postpone new-auto purchases and hold on to their present untaxed gas-guzzlers. The NBC poll showed 35 percent saying they will keep their present car longer because of the energy program.

The final irony is that General Motors, hate object of Schlesinger's staff, would show a net gain for 1978 models on the basis of the tax-rebate proposal while the industry's second and third companies, Ford and Chrysler, would lose. Overall, the program figures to disrupt market forces by causing postponement of automobile purchases vital to the economy's health. "I think it comes out of ignorance about the industry by Washington," Douglas Fraser, the UAW's president-designate, told us.

That includes not only ignorance of the individual companies but also a cultural gap. Elitist Washington officials who ride in airplanes and take pride in driving a jalopy to work do not understand that the blue-collar worker needs a car adequate for both long-range commuting and family vacations. The consequences could be a painful automotive decline without any saving in energy to show for it.

Tom Fink, Anchorage Times (April 24, 1977)

"Energy Solution: Find More Sources"

If one is running out of the available supply of a commodity, he has three choices. He can find more of it, he can find a substitute or he can do without it.

President Carter says we are running out of energy. Nearly everyone agrees that our available supply of energy is limited. The President's choice is to do without. A better choice is to find more.

Although I strongly disagree with the course our President wishes to follow, I am pleased he has created a showdown situation on energy. The Democratic congress wants to accommodate the President. Therefore, we can expect a healthy debate on the subject of finding more energy, a substitute or doing without.

The President is proceeding on the theory that we can have a viable economy and a pleasant life-style by reduction of energy use. He believes environmental damage will result from solving our problems of energy by drilling for more oil, digging and using more coal and by substantially expanding our use and research of nuclear energy.

He doesn't seem to deny that these alternatives are viable. He believes the environmental degradation that will occur is unacceptable. I hope that congress contests this major point.

The President said that Sweden and Germany have a standard of living as high as ours and use substantially less energy. I agree that

they use less energy. I do not agree, by any stretch of the imagination, that either of these countries has a standard of living as high as ours.

Since the President cannot observe as a normal man, I wish he would send a trusted confidant incognito to Germany and Sweden and get a report back. As a matter of fact, anyone who believes that story should personally visit those countries. They have neither the physical standards or the mental opportunities of the United States.

It is true that we use more energy in the United States than in any other country. There is a direct correlation between energy use and standard of living. Are we to take the United States back to hand labor for production? Is it not wasting man's talents of multiplying his production through the use of energy other than personal muscle?

We use 32 per cent of the world's energy and have only 6 per cent of the population. We produce 31 per cent of the world gross national product and have the world's most comfortable environment.

Retreating from the use of energy and the incentive to develop physical achievements is just part of the story. The mental attitude which follows is nothing less than debilitating. We cannot go forward. We take on an attitude of defeatism. We can't win, so why try? Let government make all the moves.

Everyone acknowledges that we have at least several hundred years supply of coal. Yet we continue to regulate its extraction and use to the point that we cannot count on its supplying our need.

Most people believe that in Alaska and our offshore land large reserves of oil and gas exist. Yet, primarily for environmental reasons, we are not exploring.

Most agree that sometime in the next 30 years we will have a breakthrough in controlling and using tidal power, fusion power and solar power. Yet, in losing our confidence as a nation we cannot proceed to develop these sources.

The needed government response to our current problem is removal of federal price controls on oil and gas and a substantial reduction of the laws and regulations which inhibit oil exploration.

Thank you, Mr. President, for opening the debate. You have exhibited the ability in the past to change your mind rapidly. If congress does its job of seeking out the facts and making an evaluation as leaders of this country, you will be given the opportunity to change your mind again. The only acceptable alternative is the development of new energy sources.

We are at the Rubicon. The die is about to be cast.

[Tom Fink, an Anchorage insurance man, is a former speaker of the Alaska House of Representatives.]

Clayton Fritchey, The Washington Post (April 30, 1977)

"Energy Forecast: Feast or Famine?"

Despite President Carter's television blitz in behalf of his new energy program, various polls indicate that millions of Americans (albeit a minority) still have doubts that the emergency is as acute as proclaimed. While such skepticism is exasperating to the government, it is by no means capricious.

The show-me attitude is attributed to wishful thinking about plentiful energy and to a spoiled refusal to face up to reality. It is also traced

to post-Watergate distrust of government, plus lack of confidence in the often self-serving data of the oil and gas industry. But there is more to it than that.

Most Americans applauded the President's call to arms, even if they were less impressed by his warning that the danger of an energy shortage was so imminent as to threaten a "national catastrophe." By sheer coincidence, however, Carter's television speech to Congress was followed in rapid order by a series of disparate reports, which, cumulatively, tend to suggest that an energy glut, rather than a drastic shortage, could be in the offing.

The United Nations, for example, released the results of a study made by 70 geologists, engineers and economists that estimates that the world probably has enough oil and gas for 100 years. Several days ago, a Stanford University study also concluded that oil would last beyond the end of the century. At the annual meeting of the American Physical Society in Washington, physicists were told on Wednesday that new recovery methods may make it possible to extract from currently "depleted" U.S. oilfields more than they originally produced, or about 100 billion barrels.

In Los Angeles, California energy experts and officials of Southern California Edison Co. hailed the development of a new design for the standard electric motor as "a major billion-dollar breakthrough for energy conservation." When in wide use, it could save the equivalent of one or two million barrels of oil a day, or roughly the same that the great Alaska oil field is expected to produce.

In Hanna, Wyoming, officials of the Aluminum Company of America were reported as being "very hopeful" that a much improved process called "in-situ" coal gasification can make large amounts of gas for electric utilities, as well as low-grade industrial gas, from vast coal deposits that now cannot be mined economically. It is believed the process could ultimately contribute a whopping 5 to 10 per cent of the total U.S. energy needs.

Simultaneously in Washington, the Federal Energy Administration notified 31 power plants that it intends to order them to burn coal rather than oil and gas to generate electricity. If all the plants convert to coal, the saving would be enormous.

Meanwhile the Energy Research and Development Administration, in a new effort to cut the use of gasoline and reduce metropolitan air pollution, has just selected two major manufacturers to produce test models of a practical electric car for commuters and urban driving within two years. Officials of ERDA want a vehicle with a range of about 75 miles and a top speed of 55 miles per hour for a cost "competitive with conventional autos." Recent technical advances indicate it can be done.

Rep. Mike McCormick (D-Wash.), sponsor of a \$160-million bill to promote development of electric cars, says they would cost only about a penny a mile to run, compared with 4 cents or more a mile to operate gasoline-powered autos. He also notes that charging the electric car's batteries would not require more power since up to 200 million cars could be charged during the night without causing an overload.

Several days ago, the top leaders of the New York legislature announced bipartisan sponsorship of a bill requiring the state to set up a statewide plan to recycle garbage and sewage into fuel. "The long-

range potential boggles the mind," says Warren Anderson, the senate majority leader. The sponsors estimate that 10 to 15 per cent of all the state's energy needs could be supplied by the burning of garbage and sewage.

Earlier this month, the Worldwatch Institute reported that solar resources could provide 40 per cent of the world's energy supply by the year 2000, drawing power from sunlight, the wind, running water, the burning of organic matter. It estimates that within 50 years more than 75 per cent of the earth's energy supply could come from the sun.

As for natural gas, that most precious and supposedly most exhaustible of fossil fuels, The Wall Street Journal this week estimated that, if the price is right, we have 20,000 to 50,000 trillion cubic feet at hand—"enough to last between 1000 and 2500 years at current consumption."

All this is not to say that Carter was wrong in dramatizing the problem, for even if all the potential sources of new energy are realized, there still should be a concerted effort to conserve oil and gas. In the long run—no matter how long it is—the supplies are finite.

Years ago the prime minister of Iran, one of the greatest oil-producing countries, told me his country wanted to build nuclear power plants because it was a "crime" to waste oil for ordinary fuel purposes. It should be reserved, he said, for the production of superior petrochemicals. Of course, he is right.

The debate over the Carter program is going to last a long time. There may not be much of it left when an omnibus energy bill is finally enacted. Nevertheless, after the drifting of the Nixon-Ford years, the President is deservedly getting good marks for bringing the problem to a head.

William Randolph Hearst, Jr., San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle (April 24, 1977)

"ENERGY PROBLEM IN OPEN AT LAST"

NEW YORK—The American people needed to be convinced that a real energy crisis looms and that a shortage of petroleum is not something contrived by "greedy" business interests here and greedier politicians in the oil-producing countries. President Carter has achieved that, it appears, even if the rest of his energy proposals will, predictably, open up strenuous debate.

Congress has refused through the years to face up to the truths about our main source of energy, petroleum. It was President Truman who, back in the Forties, first called the attention of the lawmakers to the fact that soon we will run out. It is a finite source of energy. Non-renewable. Now, through his very earnest presentations, Mr. Carter has hammered that message home with the warning that we will run out of oil even sooner than we expected, not only because we are using it at an accelerated rate, but because we overestimated our reserves.

His technique of presentation—first warning of what he was to say—then saying it—then holding a press conference about it—was highly effective in emphasizing the seriousness of the situation. Moreover, it impressed Congress that a solution to the problem will be the main thrust of his term in office.

Whether the solutions Mr. Carter has suggested are the best ones is of less importance at this time than the fact that our elected representatives in Washington recognize that there is a crisis impending so solutions will be sought in an intensified quest.

After warning us that his energy message would be tough and hard to take, President Carter offered a complicated set of proposals that seemed to contain some goodies for just about every one. Taxes on gasoline, to be imposed if consumption rises beyond a certain level, and excise taxes on all crude oil produced domestically to be levied in three stages until our prices equal the high world prices on oil, will be returned to the public with rebates and tax credits the government would take with one hand and give back with the other.

People who buy government-approved smaller cars that do not use as much gas as the big ones, would get rebates from Uncle Sam up to \$493. No driver is going to come out against that. In addition, homeowners would get juicy tax credits for installing solar equipment—and insulating their houses. No home owner will resist that.

Even natural gas companies, which have not been overly loved by the federal government in the past, are offered a price rise as an inducement to broaden exploration, though they will have to stop giving discounts to gas users in intrastate sales. Gasoline prices would be decontrolled—a boom to the petroleum industry—as one of the devices for making conservation more desirable. This was not a very bitter pill for the oil companies to swallow.

So what was advertised as a “get tough” policy turns out to be not so tough after all.

What it does, mostly, is put the government squarely into the energy business. It means that those clever folks who brought us the U.S. Postal Service and who highballed the nation's railroads into bankruptcy, are now going to supervise the delivery of all forms of energy, the most vital element in the nation's economy, and the most significant factor in man's material welfare.

There are many, I am sure, who believe that if the government controls the source of energy, tells us what, how much we can use, dictates how much profit its producers may earn, and sets the price that we will pay for it, free enterprise and the free marketing system will find it hard to survive.

That is the real danger in the Carter plan, as I see it, though something must be done to alter our habits of wasteful use of energy, and Mr. Carter has offered the only suggestions for action, be they good or bad.

Just as a matter of principle, it is horrifying to think of imposing taxes to manipulate people's buying habits as Mr. Carter suggests for cars and gas. It is counter to everything that Americans conceive about taxes, and contrary to the way they have felt about taxation since the founding of the republic. Taxes are to be levied for the purpose of raising money to provide for essential government services. That, and nothing more.

The greatest omission in the program is some emphasis on new oil and gas exploration and development, plus the development of known alternate sources of energy (such as coal, solar, shale, alcohol) plus discovery of new sources. We heard little of these subjects in his com-

ments. Moreover, Mr. Carter refused to stand up to the issue of conservation and environmentalism.

A 500-year supply of coal lies in the ground in the United States, much of it locked in place by laws and regulations sponsored by environmentalists. I do not intend to put down the environmentalists, but it is obvious that these well-intended people, overreacting in many respects, have made it almost impossible to extract some of our choicest low-sulfur coal, either through direct prohibitions or by regulations that make it too expensive to use as an oil substitute.

Mr. Carter made no mention of the development of new sources of petroleum, the most notable of which is the new fields under the Atlantic coastal shelf. The environmentalists and quibbling state governments seeking special tax revenues, have completely halted those developments.

Except for passing treatment, the President neglected the subject of development of nuclear energy. Many leading physicists say, however, that electric power generated by the atom is one of our greatest potential energy sources. Why leave it out of our planning at this time?

The President completely ignored the spectacular potential of alcohol for use as a substitute for oil and gas, and even natural gas, though the National Science Foundation and its Division of Renewable Research, have been working on it for years. Alcohol, a renewable resource, and hence an infinite supply can be made from any organic material. Some experts estimate that our ordinary agricultural waste could produce enough to supplant all of our gasoline needs.

The President also skipped over the important matter of the inflationary impact of his proposed program. If the price of all energy is to rise, as he suggests, then prices on just about everything will soar.

The states that are "poorest" in Amtrak and Conrail railroads are the ones that produce vast amounts of our foodstuffs. They must rely on trucks. And the trucking economy is virtually geared to the prices of gasoline and diesel fuel.

Left completely unconsidered by the President was the vital subject of mass transportation. That must figure prominently in any energy conservation program.

Mr. Carter has finally forced Congress to give serious consideration to the energy problem. Now it's on the table. Let the nation's best brains think about it, and then let's take it from there.

James J. Kilpatrick, *Washington Star* (April 26, 1977)

"Carter's Got the Right Problem, Wrong Remedy"

The big question, when it comes to formulating an energy policy, is not the survival of Jimmy Carter. It is the survival of our country.

Our natural tendency to personalize public issues tends to obscure the larger purpose. Last week in Washington, the talk was mostly of Mr. Carter—would his popularity suffer? Could he whip dissenting senators into line? Would his leadership succeed in marshalling public support for his legislative measures?

Mr. Carter's fortunes don't really matter—or at least they ought not to matter. If a national energy policy is approached in terms of a "Carter policy" or a "Democratic policy," everyone will lose in the resulting partisanship. Precisely as wars are too serious to be left to

generals, so an energy policy is too vital to entrust to presidents. If this critical problem is to be solved, it will demand a level of statesmanship seldom seen around our town, and it will demand a maturity not yet demonstrated by our free-wheeling people.

Mr. Carter, in my own view, is plainly right in his general perception. In terms of our energy requirements, we are indeed on a collision course with disaster. This is no novel perception. Spokesmen for the utilities and the petroleum companies have been sounding the same Catonian warnings for 20 years.

It is an oversimplification to say that "the world is swiftly running out of oil." Enough oil could be recovered from western shale, or from deep offshore wells, or from other processes, to last for generations. What we are running out of is oil at a price that can be absorbed without worldwide economic upheaval and without grave risk of environmental catastrophe.

But if Mr. Carter is clearly right in his general perception, he is woefully wrong in his specific proposals. At bottom, he is proposing to use the taxing power in order to tinker, tinker, tinker with the marketplace. He proposed a plan of tax credits and tax rebates that would produce an administrative nightmare. His deterrents are mostly puny; his incentives are generally feeble. Nothing in his program would contribute significantly to capital formation within the energy industry. His gestures toward the development of new forms of energy are merely gestures.

The program is a mishmash, compounded of wise concern on the one hand and political palaver on the other. Conservation is essential—of course it is essential—but the kind of conservation Mr. Carter is talking about cannot be achieved on the cheap.

It is absurd to say that his measures would add only 0.4 to the rate of inflation; a more accurate projection is twice or three times that figure. It is misleading to suggest that these things can be done without adverse environmental impact. Mr. Carter is gulling the people with his notion that their easy and extravagant "way of life" and "standard of living" can be maintained.

The power of government ought to be used, it seems to me, incisively and boldly, in a few areas only. We need realistic deterrents against waste and inefficiency in the use of fuel. And we need realistic incentives for the rapid development of alternative sources. If Congress will provide this much, the free marketplace can do the rest.

Joseph Kraft, *The Houston Post* (April 27, 1977)

"More Than Popularity Needed To Sell Congress Energy Plan"

Jimmy Carter enjoys extraordinarily high general approval in personal popularity. But Congress helped kill his original economic package and now shows resistance to the energy program. How come?

The answer is that governing the country requires support from two different constituencies—the presidential constituency and the congressional constituency. These are now poorly integrated, which is why governing has become inordinately difficult.

The presidential constituency, including most of adult America, is what we generally connote by the term public opinion. Its notions tend to be diffuse and closely connected with traditional principles. It

lacks detailed information, and likes to identify more with a single individual—the President—than issues.

Logic is not its strong point; on the contrary, public opinion usually wants to make omelets without breaking eggs. The signal it sent on Vietnam, for instance, was: "Get out, but don't lose." Within limits the presidential constituency tends to be permissive. But it can shift rapidly, when lines of policy suddenly result in unexpected costs of blood or treasure—death or taxes. So the art of presidential leadership lies in marrying to traditional principles the innovations required to deal with change while avoiding the prescribed limits of policy.

The congressional constituency represents the various regional economic interests in the country. It has a high degree of detailed knowledge, a strong acquisitive instinct and an even stronger sense of self-protection. It specializes in bringing to bear formidable negative powers for blocking change.

Inevitably the various interest groups clash. So the secret of congressional leadership lies in accommodating the rival lobbies. Compromise is its essence.

Relations between the two constituencies vary sharply according to circumstance. During times of national emergency—a war or an economic crisis—fellowship and commitment to a common goal subordinate private interests, yielding a national capacity to make sacrifices. That is why most of the greatest presidents have been wartime leaders.

At other times, usually in the wake of exhausting emergencies, private interest reasserts itself and national consensus wears away. The lobbies come into their own. There occurs what Woodrow Wilson called, in describing the period after the Civil War, "congressional government."

The present period is clearly not one that favors presidential leadership. In one way or another, three presidents in a row have been repudiated by the country. There is no national consensus on the most general issues of foreign or economic policy.

But Carter is quintessentially a presidential leader. While not strongly committed to issues, he has a superb sense of national mood. He shares the public's self-indulgent belief that contradictory positions do not necessarily involve either-or choices. He goes for the totality of opinion, not for bits and pieces.

So far Carter has shown little feel for the congressional constituency. By his own account, he is not much of a political "trader." He had difficulty with the legislature in Georgia. He was elected President without accumulating any debts in the House or Senate. He has poor connections, even with the inner lobbies of the Democratic party—labor, farm groups, ethnics and the producing interests. In his handling of public works, he has gone for high principles, rather than the accommodation that is the cement of congressional politics.

In his approach to the energy problem, Carter has sought to build up enough standing with the presidential constituency to take the congressional constituency by storm. But the urgency he built in his plea to the country was not followed in his proposals to Congress, which are notable for the absence of any immediate action by the executive branch. Whatever chance there was of stampeding the Congress into action has been foreclosed. My sense is that credit with one account is not transferable to the other.

So I doubt very much that the President can push his energy program through without doing some trading. Indeed the true question is to what extent he is willing to pay out his reputation as a man of pristine principle in order to get the congressional support that can only be acquired by compromise.

Mary McGrory, Chicago Tribune (April 29, 1977)

"Now For the Fine Print in the Energy Program"

Everybody is waiting for the fine print of Jimmy Carter's epic new energy package. The Republicans don't yet know what's in it, but they know they're going to hate it.

Democrats wish he would step on the gas. They wished they could have opened hearings the day after his speech to Congress—before their constituents fell to brooding over expected inequities.

Republicans are exercised at the thought that the additional revenues promised by the new taxes—Senate Minority Leader Howard Baker estimates them at \$70 billion—would be used for welfare or tax reform. Energy chief James Schlesinger said on Sunday that could be the case.

The Republicans have lost their bearings on a number of questions, but when it comes to choosing between some nonearner in the slums and a worker who drives 50 miles to his job, they know where they are.

Republicans understand that if anyone is going to vote for them it's going to be the Middle American whose car is his lifeline. Sixty per cent of the gas used is used to transport people to their jobs. Obviously there are more drivers than welfare recipients.

Baker called Carter's energy program "the biggest domestic tax program ever submitted," which is not the way that Carter wants the taxpayer to view it.

The Republicans don't know exactly how they would handle the energy crisis. They are not even sure there is one. But while they are marking time on their alternative plan, they are sounding a little like the oil company representatives who filled the Sunday air with their laments. Republicans want more production, not more taxes. Market forces and a windfall profits tax would be the answer.

House speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, said, without a great deal of conviction, that he thought the gasoline tax had a chance because "Americans are now more knowledgeable about the oil situation."

He reported an initial "light" but critical reaction to the tax.

The President apparently got the message of resistance in the middle of his energy exertions. He opened his first TV talk in Battle of Britain terms. By Friday, it sounded more like Bingo. The rebate to drivers who pay gas taxes could go as high as \$500.

Democrats think it would have been wiser to stay with the "sacrifice" theme a little longer. The sudden switch of signals, from pain to profit, made his Capitol Hill troops uneasy. Talk of rebates touches a still-tender nerve. The \$50 rebate was the victim of a hit-and-run accident at the White House.

Carter may have convinced Americans that the energy shortage is real. But the discussion now is shifting rapidly to "equality of sacrifice."

Disapproval of the tax on gas-guzzlers is being registered in the provinces.

Rep. Toby Moffett (D., Conn.), a member of the new, special 40-member Select House Committee on Energy, was astonished at the vehemence of his constituents' reaction. At a New Britain meeting, they were screaming at him that the Cadillac owner can afford the new penalties—the working stiff with eight children who needs a station wagon is the one who will get hammered.

The Republicans are plainly planning to introduce as their "alternative" a reworked version of the Ford program, which didn't turn on many voters' motors.

Partners? They were not consulted, Baker said crisply. Neither, as a matter of fact, were the Democrats, nor—until they protested—were several members of the Cabinet.

Carter is going to have to take the wheel himself, and soon, if he wants to get his program rolling.

Thomas E. Mullaney, *New York Times* (April 24, 1977)

"An Energy Policy—At Last"

Even the most vocal critics of President Carter's comprehensive proposals for a national energy policy last week were united in applauding his diagnosis of one of the country's most pressing problems so promptly in his Administration. And there was widespread admiration for his courage in demanding sacrifices throughout the country to try to meet what he termed "the greatest domestic challenge that our nation will face in our lifetime."

In alerting the public to the real and serious nature of the energy crisis, the President appears to have rallied broad support at last for a sound and realistic program on a monumental issue.

The crucial question in many minds, however, is whether the prescription that the President concocted for solving a serious ailment is the proper one. Some of his ingredients were obviously appropriate, but others were questionable, and there were some important missing elements.

Walter B. Wriston, chairman of Citicorp and Citibank, underscored the views of many prominent Americans in business and other areas of society, when he commented:

"The President ought to get a lot of credit for coming out in a straight way and alerting the country to the fact that we have an energy crisis. We sure do. Conservation measures are absolutely essential, but I would hope that, as the program is amended, more emphasis will be placed on new energy production of all kinds—oil, gas and nuclear.

"I didn't see as much emphasis on the supply side as on the demand side. I wish the President had talked more about drilling on the Continental shelf and letting the price go up so that people would have incentive to drill more. That would be an important step forward."

There have been alerts of a similar nature on energy from numerous sources over the last 50 years, but they have all been ignored. Even the trauma of the oil embargo by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries more than three years ago, which prices jumped

fivefold and the public endured severe shortages of an essential commodity, failed to arouse enough national interest in the necessity of a firm, far-reaching policy of energy conservation and development by the United States.

Now, though after the worst winter of the century and the shortages of fuel that closed factories, raised inflation and caused other hardships, the national disposition to undertake affirmative action on the critical energy issue seems to have heightened. And President Carter, to his great credit, quickly seized on that perception of the public mood.

In the last 25 years, demand for all types of energy in this country has grown enormously as the American economy expanded tremendously from a gross national product of some \$347 billion to its present size of more than \$1.8 trillion—almost fivefold. Cheap energy helped vastly in the development of new technologies that permitted a huge enlargement of the nation's productive system.

In the process, domestic supplies of energy became tighter and the United States became increasingly dependent on foreign sources. With no major change in prospect for economic growth and no likelihood of lessened demand for energy, it is obvious that dependence on foreign, high-cost sources would only increase in the years ahead, creating political and national security problems, as well as further straining the whole international monetary system.

It was against that background that President Carter made his decisive move last week to fight energy waste, provide incentives for conservation in homes and industry, develop coal and other alternative sources and impose new taxes on gasoline usage, oil production and autos that are heavy users of gasoline. The taxes received, it was proposed, would ultimately be returned to consumers through tax credits.

Although the proposed gasoline tax has aroused immediate and strong opposition, most of the others have received widespread endorsement, quite properly. The complexity of some of the proposals, however, has excited some misgivings about regulations and the Government bureaucracy that might be needed to pursue them. There was also some commentary that the Administration might be relying too heavily on conservation to reach its goals and was too optimistic on what can be achieved in the near term from more efficient usage of energy.

Few would deny that there are great opportunities to reduce energy usage, but many analysts contend it is erroneous to conclude that the United States wantonly wastes energy resources.

The great increase in energy consumption in this country over the last few decades arose chiefly because of its availability and low price, which was partly artificial. New industrial applications proliferated, and expanded use of natural gas in home heating developed.

It was not surprising that the shortage envisioned by the Paley Commission in 1952 finally appeared. At that time, it predicted that demand for minerals, as a whole, including fuels, would rise more than other commodities—about 90 percent, or nearly double what it had been in 1950. It actually increased considerably more.

One bank economist remarked: "The energy shortage was man-made in Washington. It was Government-legislated price controls, unwise tax policies and go-slow pressure from the environmentalists that

created our energy shortage. In a free-market economy, there may be scarcities, but never shortages. In the case of energy, if we had set out a quarter-century ago to deliberately create an energy crisis by restricting supplies and pumping up demand, we could not have done a better job than we have done."

In the current business criticisms of the Carter energy package, the most prominent objection is the absence of incentives to increase exploration and develop new oil and gas deposits in this country. There is particular faulting of the Administration's decision not to deregulate oil and gas prices completely.

"It appears that the President and his advisers have written off the possibility of new energy finds in this country," said one New York economist. "There is still quite a lot to be found if industry has the profit incentive to seek it."

Despite the adverse reactions on some of the President's proposals, the business world endorsed his plan's main thrust—the need for greater conservation of a precious resource and the creation, finally, of a national energy policy.

One of the strongest favorable reactions from business came in a statement by a major energy company, Atlantic Richfield, which said:

"The proposed energy program, we feel, points the nation in the right and necessary direction and appears to us to be balanced, gradual and fair. It gives every indication of being skillfully designed to encourage sound and essential economic and energy growth, reduce national energy vulnerability, energy conservation and environmental protection. We are prepared to support the essential thrust of the energy program, and we are hopeful that the nation as a whole will also support it."

George D. Woods, a leading financier and former head of the World Bank, who was a prime mover in trying to get Congressional approval of an energy-development plan during the Ford Administration, also had warm words for the President's plan, which he noted was developed in a four-month period.

"That's a big plus. I hope Congress argues it out and doesn't go to sleep on it. They should set a date and vote a plan in four to six months. And I hope they recognize that the private sector is given a proper role in solving our energy problem. What the Government does should be kept to a minimum."

As the international oil economist Walter J. Levy wrote recently: "The time is late; the need for action, overwhelming."

Jane Bryant Quinn, Trenton Times (April 26, 1977)

"Many Energy Conservation Curbs are Already in Effect"

NEW YORK.—You may be surprised to hear that this country has already taken many important steps toward energy conservation and planning. President Carter made it sound last week as if policymakers have been sitting around sucking their thumbs over the issue, but that's just not true. We could do more, and will. But in general, Carter's proposals are an extension of energy policies already in place. Here are some of the things that have been accomplished in three and a half years since the Arab oil embargo:

Controlled U.S. oil and natural gas prices have been allowed to rise drastically. In 1973, a barrel of U.S. crude cost \$3.39, and natural gas was 18.6 cents per thousand cubic feet at the wellhead. Today, new U.S. oil is in the \$11.25 range, and natural gas is \$1.42.

Oil companies complain that drilling is less profitable, despite the higher prices, because of increased costs and changes in the tax law. But those "less profitable" prices have encouraged an enormous amount of new exploration. Nearly 40,000 new oil and gas wells were drilled in the United States last year, the largest number since 1965.

Higher prices at the gasoline pump caused a falloff in sales to drivers after the embargo, but last year demand began climbing at preembargo rates. One man's "waste" is another man's pleasant drive to the country to visit Grandma, and we apparently can still afford to fill up our gas tanks.

Carter would continue this thrust toward higher prices. But the increases will be phased in gradually, and the gas tax would be paid back in rebates, so it probably won't cramp your driving style as much as you might think.

Mandatory gas-efficiency standards for new autos have already vastly improved mileage over what it used to be. Between shifting to smaller cars and building more efficient engines, automakers have increased new car mileage 34 percent in the last three years.

Carter proposes to hasten the switch to better mileage by putting a tax on cars that consume a lot of fuel and giving a rebate to buyers of gas-efficient cars.

Energy efficiency standards and labeling requirements were mandated under the Ford administration for major home appliances such as refrigerators. They require a 20 per cent improvement in efficiency by 1980, as compared to 1972. Carter would get this program moving faster.

Current law also calls for setting national energy efficiency standards, to be incorporated into state and local building codes. Carter would accelerate the date for publishing those standards from 1981 to 1980.

The amount of domestic oil available for use has been increased since the Arab oil embargo (although total production is down). Three Naval petroleum reserves are now open for production and the fourth, in Alaska, for limited exploration. The Alaskan oil pipeline will be completed this summer. According to the Oil & Gas Journal, it will increase production an average of around 275,000 barrels per day this year and 1.2 million per day in 1978.

The Federal Energy Administration already has the authority to order oil or gas-fuel power plants to switch to coal. About 25 have changed over since 1974, another 50 are under orders to do so, and more orders will be coming. Of the 143 non-nuclear power plants designed since 1974 and approved by the FEA, 142 will burn coal (and probably the remaining one will, too). Carter would accelerate the switch to coal by taxing non-users.

He backed off from forcing homeowners to insulate, which could have made a big difference to heating-oil consumption. But his proposed insulation and solar tax credits would be welcome. Congress has rejected them in the past, but with Carter's backing perhaps they'll pass.

In sum, Carter's ideas are not a sharp break with a slothful and wasteful past. Since 1973, this nation has been adjusting itself rapidly to higher energy prices. Carter is simply giving it a solid shove in the same direction.

Bill Raspberry, Chicago Sun-Times (April 26, 1977)

"No Bite To Chew On"

PRESIDENT CARTER:

I'm disappointed. I was so certain that your energy proposals would call on us to bite the bullet. Instead, you've been passing out marshmallows. And mostly voluntary marshmallows at that.

Not only won't the proposals work; they betray a misunderstanding of us that is staggering. I had thought you understood us. In fact, I had been marveling to my friends about how well you understood us, no matter what the politicians and political writers were saying.

Well, you don't understand us at all, and since some understanding is important to the success of what you are trying to accomplish, I'll try to help you.

Take that business of the nickel-a-gallon increase (starting a year from next January) in the cost of gasoline, with another nickel added each year for ten years if we don't start using less.

That's great, if your purpose is to raise money. But let me tell you something about us. Give us a choice of buying gasoline on one side of the street for 65 cents or on the other for 60 cents, and we'll make a U-turn or drive around the block (if the traffic isn't too heavy) in order to save the five cents a gallon.

But if it costs 65 cents on both sides of the street, do you think for a moment we'll buy less gas? I could not tell you within five cents a gallon what I paid for my last full tank.

You want me to start using less gas? Then instead of stringing out a 50-cent increase over a full decade, sock it to me all at once, right now. If the stuff costs me \$1.10 a gallon tonight, I'd take the bus to work tomorrow morning.

The all-at-once increase would be a heavy load for people who have to use their cars to get to their jobs, but so would your dribdrab approach. In both cases, the result would not be that they used less gasoline, but that it cost them more.

Perhaps it is your engineering background, but you seem to understand the practical, mechanical aspects of the situation very well. It is when you translate those practical facts into human terms that you run into trouble.

To talk to a luxury car buff about a nickle-a-gallon increase in gasoline, is an inefficient use of your breath. Even your more imaginative proposal for adding a \$449 excise tax to the cost of owning a car that gets less than 13 miles per gallon doesn't cut much ice with this guy, if he can afford a luxury car to begin with.

But aren't we willing to sacrifice for the national good? I hear you ask. Of course we are; Americans have always been willing to sacrifice for the national good.

But we have never been willing to sacrifice voluntarily. We remember with great pride how we sacrificed for the war effort back in the '40s. We drove as little as possible, conserving both gasoline and rub-

ber; we ate less meat and sugar and wore our shoes longer so the soldier boys could have more of these things, and we felt damned proud over what we were doing.

What you forget is that the reason we ate and wore less was that the ration books gave us no choice. It was the rationing of gasoline, not the Is-This-Trip-Necessary? windshield stickers, that reduced our gasoline consumption.

Don't suppose for a moment that we don't want your energy conservation program to work. We do. You have convinced us, no matter how suspicious we are of the petroleum companies, that we are running out of gas and oil.

Your mistake is in thinking of us as intelligent, self-controlled people, who only need to know the facts in order to do the right thing. You suppose that leadership consists of persuading us as to the facts.

But our wills are not our own. Leadership, you must understand, consists of making us do what has to be done, then talking us into feeling noble about it.

James Reston, *Chicago Tribune* (April 24, 1977)

"Can Congress Handle the Energy Fireball?"

President Carter has had his say on the energy crisis, and the issue now moves to the political cockpit of Congress, with its new leadership, and to the arena of public opinion. Here there is general agreement about the President's ends and a tangle of disagreements about his means.

On the whole, the President is given good marks on Capitol Hill for dramatizing the energy problem, for putting it to the nation in the conviction that he must serve the truth and not opinion, and for trying to do what he thinks is right, whether or not he is sure to succeed. But there are some honest and even violent doubts here, and the Congress is obviously not going to agree with him that this is simply "a matter of patriotism and commitment."

Many members, for example, are still unconvinced about the inevitability of the disaster Carter fears. They note that he is asking for unprecedented measures, but also that he seems a little unsure himself about the factual base on which his fears are founded.

"If we are asking sacrifices of ourselves," he told the Congress, "we need facts we can count on. We need an independent information system that will give us reliable data about energy reserves and production, emergency capabilities and financial data from the energy producers." But he put forward his program without that "independent" data.

Other members of Congress feel there was a substantial difference between the melody of Carter's address to the nation on Monday and his speech to the Congress on Wednesday. On Monday, he sounded like Winston Churchill on the eve of the Battle of Britain. He was talking about "a problem unprecedented in our history." If we fail to act soon, he said, "we will face an economic, social, and political crisis that will threaten our free institutions." The alternative to his energy policy, he insisted, "may be a national catastrophe."

But on Wednesday, before the Congress, while still solemn, he was less apocalyptic, and even suggested that his program would "protect

jobs, our environment, our national independence, our standard of living, and our future." In short, the official conclusion seemed to be, not that the sacrifices would be a harsh burden on the American people, or change their styles or life very much, but that it would create more work, increase the gross national product, and raise the inflation rate by only 0.4 percentage points. All this, of course, is being challenged in the Congress.

So the controversy remains, but the scene and the cast of characters change. Now it is not only the new President, but the new leaders of the Congress who will be tested. Jimmy Carter has been so prominent in these last three months that it has been easy to forget that we now have new Democratic and Republican leaders in the Senate, a new speaker and majority leader in the House of Representatives, a lot of new rules, and a lot of new members in the House, almost half of them under 40.

The question now is whether the Democrats downtown and the Democrats on the Hill can get together and govern—as they insisted they could do in the presidential campaign—and much will depend on how Speaker O'Neill in the House and Senate Majority Leader Byrd manage their new responsibilities.

Byrd suggested in a talk with this reporter that what we need now is a reflective pause to sort out all these changes. "My first concern," he said, "is that we don't start shooting holes in the President's proposals before we even study it, and that's going on already."

"This disturbs me," he said. "It's a very comprehensive and complex package. We've got to cost these things out."

Carl T. Rowan, *The Times-Picayune*, New Orleans (April 25, 1977)

"Energy Plan Tests National Character"

WASHINGTON.—Some say that President Carter's pain-spreading energy proposal will be his greatest test as leader—that we shall soon learn whether the Georgian can move the nation the way Franklin D. Roosevelt did when it writhed in a grim depression while the clouds of war rolled in.

Others say this energy plan will test the mettle of the Congress and its leadership—that we shall soon know whether we have legislative bodies dedicated primarily to an overriding national interest or just a group of narrow-minded men and women who will waste months in windbaggy designed to win special concessions for their favorite industry, their geographical area, their class of Americans.

Still others say that the Carter proposals will test the character of the American people—that we shall learn quickly whether we have become so steeped in gluttony that we can never willingly give up big cars which we drive to work in lonely splendor, stop cruising in big pleasure boats, or make any of the other sacrifices the President says we must.

All of these suppositions are accurate, but the grimmest test relates to the character of the American people. Few things are more difficult for a family, or a nation of families, than the lowering of its standard of living. The tendency is to go on spending and consuming almost recklessly, believing that somehow tomorrow will take care of itself.

Well, there must be no doubt that Mr. Carter's proposal means a decline in just about everyone's standard of life. Sen. William Proxmire (D.-Wis.) said the other day: "It's going to diminish the amount of income people have available . . . it will particularly increase unemployment in the automobile industry and in the housing industry. It's going to reduce business investment in plants and equipment. It will tend to increase profits. The overall effect will be both inflationary and recessionary."

As terrible as that may sound, we must not forget that we can tighten our energy belts a lot and still have a remarkably high standard of living. The West Germans and Swedes live at very high levels, yet they consume only half as much energy per person as we do. Japan's 112 million people go a year on the same amount of energy as we waste. Some 800 million Chinese use, for all purposes, in a year the same amount of energy as 215 million Americans use for air-conditioning alone.

No matter how cynical some Americans are about the genuineness of the energy crisis, this nation's future well-being requires the stringent conservation measures Mr. Carter demands—plus a mammoth effort to find and develop new sources of energy.

The success or failure of the Carter plan may be affected not so much by the magnitude of sacrifice he has called for as public perceptions as to whether the suffering is spread out fairly to all groups and classes.

The automobile industry is a natural target for conservation, since our cars consume some 73 billion gallons of fuel every year. If we saved but one gallon of gasoline a week for every auto on our roads, we'd save 5.2 billion gallons a year.

It will take some doing for government to ensure that the auto industry and auto workers do not suffer inequitably. Many Americans start out skeptical of Mr. Carter's pledge that the poor will not be driven into deeper poverty, that oil companies will not be allowed to "profiteer," or that we can have both a drastic reduction in gasoline usage and ever stricter auto emission standards.

But no amount of skepticism will erase the reality that our day of reckoning is coming in the energy field. Let us try to face it with fair, logical plans rather than the bedlam that awaits us if we go in glutinous plunder until disaster greets us.

Louis Rukeyser, Tallahassee Democrat (April 17, 1977)

"New Energy Program: Let's Drop Demagoguery"

NEW YORK.—Thoughts while waiting for the President's energy program:

(1) Let's hope it's more than a hair of the dog that bit us.

The pooch that pecked us was, after all, the government itself. Its continual interventions into the energy market are what distorted the price structure, created artificial (and then very real) shortages and left us vulnerable to blackmail and extortion from the Mideast. As Elizabeth Barrett Browning once remarked, on another warm subject, "Let me count the ways."

For a generation, Congressmen from gas-consuming areas bragged about how low they had held the interstate price of natural gas. While

suckers were applauding, two entirely predictable results occurred—excessive use and inadequate production. Use became excessive because the price was artificially low; production lagged because the depressed price did not offer a return competitive with that of other investments.

Nor was production curtailed only in the natural gas fields. This country is blessed with extraordinary, and internationally unique, reservoirs of coal.

The development of modern uses of coal lagged critically because it couldn't be done at prices competitive with the controlled price of natural gas. And more recently, controls on domestic oil prices have hobbled what could have been an explosion of energy exploration to end our dependence on the Arabs.

If Carter is truly going to move the nation forward on energy, he will have to recognize the bankruptcy of Congress' activities in this area. (As its first major move after the Arab oil embargo, Congress reduced the oil depletion allowance—whose purpose for decades, in notably less perilous times, had been to increase U.S. energy production. Having thus moved to discourage producers, and to lower what had in fact operated as a subsidy to the consumer, Congress rested—and went back to berating the oil companies.)

The President, to be effective, has to take us beyond a program that makes scapegoats of the only people who can get us out from under the Arab thumb—and makes tin heroes out of the legislators who have contributed to our slippage.

(2) Let's hope it really offers us a handle—and not just a hairshirt.

The advance leaks about the Carter energy program have been so numerous that if they could be gathered in one container and transformed into oil, they might solve the energy crisis all by themselves. But too many of them have emphasized the President's apparent intention to curb consumption.

Conservation is plainly a necessity, in our present state, and as noted Congress' own policies have spurred the profligate use of some resources. But despite the moral smugness that makes some people think there is something evil in the average fellow's desire to live better, a long-term prescription of "less" is neither necessary nor desirable.

The alternative is, while restraining consumption now, to move vigorously toward developing our own resources. In this respect, it would be a far more positive long-run step to remove all the debilitating controls on natural gas and oil than to turn down every thermostat in America. We can expect an inspiring call to rally in the common interests; the real question is whether the President's program will itself perceive that interest. Cardigans are comfy, but they do not constitute an effective policy.

(3) Let's hope it genuinely ends uncertainty—instead of just creating more.

The recent disarray in the financial markets is evidence that much of the country is deeply worried about Carter's ability to cope with inflation and to implement an energy program that will not stop the economic recovery in its tracks. He has a chance this week to soothe that concern, at least in the energy area, by demonstrating that he has a clear, viable policy that will reverse our still growing dependence on unreliable foreign supplies.

Godfrey Sperling, Jr., The Christian Science Monitor (April 20, 1977)

"Risks, And Rewards, of a 'Tough' Energy Plan"

WASHINGTON.

A long time ago Dwight D. Eisenhower, when President, said that doing the right thing or trying to do the right thing was also the best politics.

If this thesis is correct, President Carter may well prevail with an energy program that quite obviously will be difficult for the American people to swallow.

Although Mr. Carter is leaning heavily on the grimmest statistics and the bleakest outlook for the U.S. energy supply that he can lay his hands on, as he pleads for public support for his proposals, it seems that all respected scientific studies of energy supply indicate the U.S. will be running into shortage and crisis within a relatively few years.

Thus, there is a prevailing view among observers in this city that Mr. Carter is, basically, correct in his dire predictions.

Further, even though these same veteran observers see trouble ahead for Mr. Carter in winning out on some of his proposals—particularly the gas-tax increase—they tend to feel that he will, doubtless, after a tough and protracted struggle with Congress, get at least a start toward an effective energy policy.

In essence, the view in knowledgeable Washington circles is this: Mr. Carter will, at least, get "something" out of his energy proposals and this "something" will likely be substantial and meaningful.

Beyond these cautious predictions of at least limited success for the President, there is a keen awareness among White House watchers here that Mr. Carter moves now into a wholly new terrain, one where political risk is tremendous.

The hazards facing the President are said to be these:

- He must avoid 'overkill' as he seeks to persuade members of Congress to support his program. That is, he must be extremely patient with Congress, and he must put most of his emphasis on quiet persuasion and not on twisting arms.

- Further, although his strength lies with his widespread popularity, he must be very careful lest he antagonize congressmen and senators by giving them the impression he is going over their heads to the people.

Mr. Carter must play his trump card at times—by seeking to persuade the public to accept sacrifice, as he was doing in his TV talk the evening of April 18—but he must be careful not to make it appear that he is asking the people to prod Congress.

One observer here says this of Mr. Carter's political path: "It will be an exercise in presidential dexterity."

President Eisenhower never said that doing the right thing was instantly perceived by the public as the right thing—instead, he said that doing what was right would, in the end, be perceived as right by the public.

This element of eventuality seems to apply particularly to what Mr. Carter now is proposing.

He's starting off with a public which—some polls show—is largely unconvinced there truly is an energy crisis that calls for drastic measures.

And while Congress may be pretty much agreed on the facts about the energy shorage as the President presents them, it certainly won't move too far ahead of public opinion.

So the President has embarked on a rough journey, one that could be long.

Political experts regard it as a big gamble.

But they seem agreed that, if Mr. Carter is patient and dexterous, he will win out in time—at least in part.

Nicholas von Hoffman, The Washington Post (May 6, 1977)

"Scare Tactics and the Energy 'War' "

Richard Nixon used to tell us that the courageous act he was about to perform was going to cost him popularity but he would suffer it for the country. Carter and his administration are doing the same with oil and energy.

If he does lose popularity, it won't be because we fail to appreciate his zeal for his nation, but because his performance has been as vacuously theatrical as it has been poorly thought out. To keep repeating the energy situation is "the moral equivalent of war" as he sends his Archangel of Energy, James Schlesinger, talking about Pearl Harbor, is to plant the suspicion that President Carter is covering a weak set of facts with strong overdramatization.

American statesmen fall back on creating patriotic crises for a number of reasons. They see their own opportunity for greatness only in terms of the turbulence and uproar of crisis. Heroic Churchill against a backdrop of London in flames.

Crisis provides men like Carter and Schlesinger, who feel the power and authority of the central government has weakened in the past decade, the chance to strengthen it. "The first principle is that we can have an effective and comprehensive energy policy only if the Government (capital G is in the text) takes responsibility for it," quotes our worried leader. Four years ago we saw the capital-G take effective responsibility for gasoline allocations with the result that there was no gas in some states and price wars in others. A less-promising approach to our very real energy problems can scarcely be conceived than giving more authority to a set of institutions which, after 200 years of existence, has yet to learn how to deliver the mail.

A crisis is defined by our public officials as a time of sacrifice, a time to "test the character of the American people," to quote Carter again. You and I may shudder when we hear Carter and Schlesinger welcome the harsh deprivations associated with war and other periods when the people are miserable and statesmen wax great; the theologians of Government, however, see the national destiny in adversity.

We are a fat, self-indulgent people needing to be disciplined and brought down to fighting weight.

And it is so without purpose. The proven oil resources of the world are greater today than they were a decade ago, so that the crisis, if there ever is one, is at least 10, but probably 25 years down the road. We have the time we need to shift from an energy-intensive society to an energy-frugal one without sacrifices to Jimmy Carter's metaphysical needs.

The difficulty is that our own leaders underestimate us. They don't believe that we're capable of adopting and sticking to a plan or a program which will not bear fruit for perhaps 20 years. Another reason for a crisis. We have to be scared into action because we are such thoughtless, improvident energy-pigs that nothing less than a call to the colors will induce us to act rationally.

Our national cultural trait is just the opposite. We're great planners for the future. A nation of squirrels who sock away our nuts for the winter. Look at the billions upon billions in our savings and loan associations; billions upon hundreds of billions tied up in insurance; look at our lust for home ownership. We, a people who live with the obsessing and depressing fear of an impecunious old age, do not have to be convinced to act now to provide for the future.

We do have to be convinced, however, that the situation is as the President defines it. Cranking the CIA up to release a too-timely fright report on world oil reserves the day before President Carter starts his patriotic hullabaloo isn't the way to convince us. The CIA is an agency with a reputation for inaccuracy, an agency that couldn't tell the difference between dead water buffalo and dead Vietcong back in the old body count days. Now it jumps forward to yes-man the new Commander-in-Chief with an incompetent oil analysis.

The moral equivalent of war? The exact equivalent of hyperbole.

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Tom Wicker, *New York Times* (April 22, 1977)

"Questions on Energy"

Three questions about President Carter's energy program:

1. After his two television appearances and the submission of so much data to Congress and the public, do most of the people yet believe that there is an energy crisis—that our oil and gas are simply running out?

If not, there's little hope that the Carter program can be effective, or even that some of its most crucial elements will be approved by Congress. Successful conservation measures are heavily dependent on general public acceptance of the fact that in the near future the available gas and oil just won't sustain continued high—much less rising—consumption.

But effective conservation is the key to the success of Mr. Carter's energy policy. It may be, for example, that the oil companies are right that proper "incentives" would enable them to discover new sources of oil; but if every projection available is correct, not enough oil in addition to already known reserves can possibly be found and produced to sustain the kind of annually increasing consumption to which the world—the United States in particular—has been accustomed.

Hence, no matter what incentives Mr. Carter might have proposed for the oil companies to explore new fields, conservation still is going to be vital. And to the extent that a "crash" program for expanded oil production might have left the public impression that supply might yet somehow be made to meet unlimited demand, the need for con-

servation would have been taken less seriously. Anything that even looked, moreover, like a windfall for the oil companies or big business would surely diminish the public's willingness to conserve.

Even some business leaders don't seem to have grasped the essential point. David M. Roderick, president of the United States Steel Corporation, complained the other day that the proposed tax on big gas-guzzling cars might hurt the steel business. So it might, but the remedy is hardly to insist that big cars still be built even when there's no more gas for them to guzzle. Instead some other market for steel will have to be found or developed; how about public transit.

2. Aren't the American people being asked to accept radical changes in their life style and expectations?

Not really. They're certainly being asked to make some sacrifices and live with some new costs and restrictions. But the Carter energy policy actually is a relatively conservative program to preserve two major elements of the American mode of living—the family car and the house in suburbia.

How much real change in life style is it to accept an automobile about the size of, say, a Chevette or a Pinto or a Toyota, rather than insisting on a big four-door, six-passenger sedan with enough horses under the hood to haul a battleship? Millions of Americans learned during and after the 1973 embargo that they could get where they were going nearly as quickly at a steady 55 m.p.h., and with significant gas savings at that. Driving less and slower in a smaller car isn't a very radical change.

Similarly, tax incentives to make a household more energy-efficient and to encourage solar heat installation is scarcely an onerous imposition of sacrifice and hardship. Overall heating, cooling and lighting costs are going to go up, probably even more than offsetting tax incentives and rebates; but again, the idea is to preserve the comfortable family house as well as the family automobile, without either of which suburbia could not survive.

3. Has the Administration sufficiently planned for the inflationary consequences of putting its energy policy into effect?

Not as things now appear. Mr. Carter has conceded that the plan's impact will be inflationary. Even before the energy policy can go into effect, moreover, the economy is moving ahead in a way that could threaten renewed inflation. Yet, the anti-inflation plan the President has announced has all the force of a falling peanut.

It seems almost quixotic, for a man as economically cautious as Mr. Carter is proving himself to be, to have put forward an energy program potentially so inflationary without visible means of countering its price and wage pressures. The explanation may be political: The program will be hard enough to put across without calling attention to its inflationary consequences.

Nevertheless, the energy policy will raise the cost to consumers for necessary fuels, as well as have a ripple effect on all prices throughout the economy. That could trigger escalator clauses in wage contracts and Social Security benefits and set off new rounds of wage increases. Rebated taxes coming back to consumers will add to the pressures, and the Federal Reserve might either have to risk stimulating further inflation by increasing the money supply to accommodate the

energy price increase, or risk a turn toward recession if it slowed the growth of the money supply too much to counter inflation.

Mr. Carter has proclaimed a goal of reducing inflation to 4 percent by 1980. His energy policy, vital as it is, will make that goal harder to reach—particularly if he seriously intends to rely primarily on voluntarism, good will and patriotism to hold down prices and wages.

George F. Will, *Newsweek* (April 18, 1977)

"Hit Us Hard, Please, Mr. Carter"

President Carter, who knows the hymn, has been sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness, sowing in the noontide and the dewy eves. Since Jan. 20, he has spent more than seven hours talking gently to the nation on radio or television, helping the nation feel more comfortable with him than it felt when rendering that equivocal election result. But now come the unkindest of cuts. Carter has promised, with characteristic panache, that on April 20 he will give the nation an energy policy as serious as its energy problem. He says the policy may cost him the sheaves of popularity he has harvested in the last three months.

There have been three presidents in the three and a half years since the Arabs did this nation the favor of making the energy crisis visible. President Nixon, who had other worries, invoked the chimera of "energy independence." President Ford opposed a stiff tax on gasoline to cut demand: "I was interested in a poll that was published today which indicated that 81 per cent of the people don't agree with the various people who are advocating this. I think I'm on solid ground." But all ground seems solid when your ear is to it, and as Churchill said, it is hard to look up to "leaders" seen in that position. Carter seems prepared to govern. He knows popularity is capital that cannot be banked forever. After hearing Carter on energy, the nation may feel that someone big has hit it hard with something heavy.

ENERGY: A MALTHUSIAN PROBLEM

The energy crisis is, basically, an oil crisis. It is a pure Malthusian problem, the exponential growth of demand against an exhaustible supply of an indispensable commodity. To state the problem is to comprehend the essence of Carter's policy: conservation. In the short run, it is cheaper to save oil than to produce. In the medium run, no practicable incentives will cause production to increase as fast as demand will increase unless governments cut demand. And in the not-so-long run, all production incentives will collide with the exhaustion of recoverable reserves.

Among major industrial nations only the Soviet Union is currently self-sufficient in energy. The U.S. cannot meet essential energy needs from sources secure from military or political interdiction. So the stabilizing power of the non-Communist world is vulnerable to production decisions made by a few Saudi leaders. They have a \$20 billion trade surplus. They have no economic reason to increase the pace at which they exchange oil of increasing value for paper of decreasing value.

Weak governments, afraid to compel conservation, have printed too much money in order to prevent standards of living from declining as a result of the export of purchasing power to oil-exporting countries. Fragile countries have borrowed enormous sums rather than allow energy costs to curtail development. The result is inflation. And producing countries will not cheerfully expand production of a wasting asset in exchange for currencies of wasting values.

DEMAND VERSUS CAPACITY

In the 1950s the world consumed more oil than had been consumed in all history. In the 1960s it did again. Today the non-Communist world uses 50 million barrels a day, the Communist world 10 million. Saudi Arabia has the only substantial capacity for increased production: in a few years it could go from 10 million to 20 million barrels a day. But world demand growing at 5 per cent annually would slurp up such a Saudi increase in four years. Mankind has used 360 billion barrels. There may be 1.5 trillion left. But even if use grows only 2 per cent a year, oil will be gone in less than 50 years, and severe shortages will begin much sooner.

Carter's energy ace is James Schlesinger, a man of somewhat cumbersome architecture, slow in movement but quick in comprehension. He has a smile like pale February sunshine, and precious little to smile about, considering that soon businessmen, environmentalists and people who own houses or automobiles may want to tear him into thin shreds and scatter him across the Potomac to teach him a lesson. His recommendations (more dirty strip-mined coal, more nuclear plants, higher prices) will be democratically disagreeable.

The policy must influence billions of decisions by millions of Americans, and exhortations to voluntarism will not suffice. This is, in part, because there is no current shortage and there will be a conspicuous surplus when Alaskan oil begins flowing this summer. But the main reason why conservation demands determined government action—the coercion of regulations, taxes and rising prices—is that conservation must conflict with two cherished American values, comfort and convenience.

Less than half of U.S. energy is used in the production of goods and services. Most of it is used in individuals' consumption, especially in furnaces, air conditioners and, of course, automobiles.

Through the ages there have been essential commodities the demand for which is relatively "price inelastic." That is, demand dropped only slightly even when price rose steeply. Salt was one such commodity. Today gasoline is another because automobiles are essential for so many cherished things like Sunday drives, cross-country vacations, low-density suburban living. It is politically risky to start using government to revise the American Way of Life. But it is irresponsible not to.

Americans tend to misplace reality; often they lose it at the movies. I suspect that movies like "Giant" shaped American attitudes about the limitlessness of oil. You may remember Jett Rink (James Dean) poking around in dusty Texas earth and striking oil in his own backyard. Soon he had something like Spindletop drenching him with oil.

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY'S DILEMMA

But in 1972 a Texas official said of the Texas oil fields, "This old warrior can't rise any more." The familiar word is depletion and it may mean the end of a lot that is familiar. The consumer civilization of the postwar period was made possible by \$2-a-barrel oil. For a century—about half the life of liberal democracy—we have been passing through what scholars call an "energy bubble" of cheap oil. Viewed against the vast back-drop of history, this experience has been highly unnatural.

Liberal democracy is government that rests lightly upon people. It has existed rarely, and only during the two centuries of rapid economic growth in the West. It probably has been made possible by that growth, by the belief that a rising tide raises all boats, a belief that dampens the worst social conflicts. And viewed against the backdrop of history, our experience of liberal democracy has been, as Saul Bellow says, "brief as a bubble."

April 20 will be an important day in the history of popular government. What Carter says will be evidence of a free people's willingness to be far-sighted, to be governors of rather than governed by appetites. To be, in a word, mature.

Garry Wills, Chicago Sun-Times (April 25, 1977)

"Energy of Sacrifice Takes Courage"

WASHINGTON.—In World War II, there was a positive demand for sacrifice. Wearing real nylons became unpatriotic. Scrap rubber and tin drives were enthusiastically supported, though it turned out that they contributed nothing to the war effort. Gasoline rationing put us all behind coded stickers on the windshield and filled wallets with ragged stamp-clusters.

Restrictions ran beyond actual need because they were, despite some grumbling and the inevitable noncompliance of a few, broadly popular.

Today our Faustian Western culture indicates the danger of excess. If authoritarian cultures like the Chinese have overdone the need for public orthodoxy and submission, our culture has boasted of its entire lack of restraint.

Our growth has been phenomenal. Promethean, voracious. Jefferson doubled this nation's size with the Louisiana Purchase early in the 19th Century. By the end of that century, we had trebled that size in settled and productive land. At the turn of the century we looked elsewhere for new frontiers, and open doors, and a manifest destiny in the Pacific. A third of a century ago we replaced the British Empire as the world's commercial arbiter and naval policeman and added to that our space and nuclear exploits.

Legends like that of Faust and Prometheus have been the West's way of recognizing a danger in the endless reach and constant expansion. At a certain point in any explosion, outward push becomes mere diffusion, disintegration.

We are reaching that point, that quiet turn from active energy to mere inertia and outward drift. President Carter's energy speech poses a fatal test—Do we have the courage and wisdom to recognize the

danger without such rude reminders of peril as outright war or such signals as the oil embargo?

Our push, by its very energy and efficiency, has come up against the limits of a finite world. We have banged our head on the stars, and must learn to duck. While we were filling up continents and emptying their reservoirs, the rest of the world was growing also—more passively, less exploitatively, but inexorably.

Sheer population poses a severe test to the world's balance and survival. Multiplying needs of the vast poor and consumptive few crisscross, threatening a rat-scramble in a bare room for our descendants if we are not wise enough to plan, retrench, reorganize.

Carter's speech asks us to rethink the very bases of our past creativity. To start on a fresh course. It would be no surprise if we failed so profound a test of creativity, only a tragedy—for us and for the rest of the world.

Those who mock Carter's approach as Henny-Pennyism are the real cowards of our time. Carter comes to the fight not too early, but too late. Other Presidents shed crocodile tears over the danger and did nothing. When a President finally decides to do something—and even his program is not enough, except as a start—he needs all the allies he can get.



